

■ NEWS/A2

VACC report claims
Ultra gate to
Wowowee electrified

Series of explosive protests
until GMA quits, says group

By Dona Pazzibugan
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A GROUP CLAIMING TO BE COMPOSED OF young military officers yesterday announced the start of a "series of explosive protest activities" just hours after a powerful blast rocked Malacañang.

In an unsigned statement sent through fax, the Young Officers Union of the New Generation and

SERIES/A1

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

■ ACROSS/AB
17 C. Luzon villages in 3 provinces at risk for landslides, says geologist

■ NEWS/A2

Joker: If SC sustains EO 464, GMA would be quasi-dictator

■ ENTERTAINMENT/A2-1

Tonyboy Cojuangco's dream of building digital theaters dashed

GMA sends off Spanish rescue team, dogs to Leyte

By Nikko Dizon

THREE K-9 DOGS SENT by the Spanish government to assist in the search-and-rescue operations in Southern Leyte had no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo

GMA SENDS/A16



PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, February 21, 2006

★★

4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 75

P1B

website: www.inq7.net

Blast rocks Malacañang

Explosion also
hits Makati;
grenade found
in Quezon City

By Christine O. Avendaño

AS PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo was about to meet with officials of the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) for a thanksgiving lunch in Malacañang yesterday, a loud explosion rocked the Palace grounds.

The explosion, which occurred at 12:02 p.m. in front of the Radio and Television Malacañang office (RTVM), shook nearby offices but did not cause serious damage.

A second explosive device went off on a street in Makati City at 1:30 p.m., injuring a 3-year-old girl.

Hours before, a grenade with its safety pin missing was disarmed by police in Quezon City. It was found in a garbage bin outside the National Printing Office.

It was unclear if the two other cases were related to the blast at Malacañang.

A group claiming to be young "reformist" military officers claimed in a statement that it "started today a series of explosive protest activities that will continue and even escalate until Gloria Arroyo leaves the presidency." (See story above.)

The unsigned statement was sent through fax by the Young Officers Union of the New Generation (YOUNG) and Reformist AFP (RAFP).

Brig. Gen. Delfin Bangit, head of the Presi-



FARMER Venancio Mendoza, 50, leads US Marines to where his house once stood in Barangay Guinsaugon hoping they could find what he has lost. His daughter Chona was at the village elementary school that disappeared under the mudslides last Friday.

EDWIN BACASMAS



UNEXPECTED VISITOR: Business tycoon Lucio Tan surveys the wasteland on Monday. (See Page A17.)

By Volt Contreras,
Jani Arnaiz
and Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—First there were "scratches" on what seemed like a metal

sheet. Then rhythmic tapping. Finally, there were sounds like human voices.

Hope was coming in trickles yesterday but it was enough to lift the spirits of rescue teams scrambling to save about 250 children and teachers feared buried in a

school that disappeared under a massive landslide.

Gov. Rosette Lleras told the INQUIRER at about 4 p.m. that she just got a report from a Filipino rescue team that it had just heard "very faint rhythmic tapping" at the site

VOICES/A16

Voices heard below the ground

EDSA-I



THE MILITARY

Why the cannons did not fire at EDSA

By Napoleon C. Manalo

(First of two parts)

THIS IS THE STORY OF MY FATHER WHO died without being recognized for the very large contribution he made to the first EDSA people power revolution, a very sad gift for a military man who served his country well for 35 years.

My father, Col. Carlos B. Manalo, the chief ordnance and bomb disposal expert of the Philippine Constabulary, died on June 11, 1998. He never had the satisfaction of having his act of heroism recognized. None of the books that supposedly covered every event during the four days of EDSA mentioned his name.

If EDSA did not become a

bloody event, it was because my father refused to follow the orders of Gen. Fabian Ver to release the ammunition for the howitzers that would have fired at the crowds at EDSA.

And after President Marcos quit Malacañang, it was my father who cleared the grounds of all the bombs that Maj. Wyndo Ver had

WHY/A16

Bishop Soc slams govt.,
Edsa I 'pimps and rapists'

POLITICIANS, PARTICULARLY those who have benefited from it, have raped People Power, according to a bishop who was a veteran of the February 1986 uprising that awed the world.

In a scathing statement titled "Looking at People Power," Balanga Bishop Socrates Villegas, who was a close associate of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, yesterday said the low-key celebration prepared by President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration was indicative of the behavior of "pimps and rapists" who abandoned their victim after getting what they wanted.

Villegas said the administration was staging a simple celebration and banking on the euphemism that people power was really in the heart simply because it had "abused and plundered" the legacy of the event.

"I protest against the way the government remembers its roots," he said. "I pity people power."

As confidant of then Manila Archbishop Sin, Villegas had an insider's look at the civilian-backed revolt that toppled the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

It was Sin, the would-be bishop's longtime mentor, who had called on the people to converge on EDSA and help secure then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and then Armed Forces Vice Chief of Staff Fidel V. Ramos.

BISHOP SOC/A16

THE PEOPLE
Kitchen brigade with no stove, water or food

By Luz Gaerlan-Lopez

WHEN AN OFFICER went to the gate of Camp Crame on Day One of the 1986 People Power revolution to ask for people who could cook, I was one of those who immediately volunteered.

I was then 55 years old, a volunteer in the Cory Aquino election campaign and

KITCHEN/A15

I gave light

By Julie Garcia

I WAS ONLY TURNING 6 years old when the first EDSA Revolution occurred. I could barely understand what was happening or the political situation we were facing.

I was curious to know what was going on, but I know that something big was taking place.

I could see on television that a lot of people were marching in the streets, praying.

I GAVE/A15

STOP POLITICAL REPRESSION



THE PALACE

Rebels bomb Malacañang; 'Marcos stoic'

By Rita B. Gadi

(First of two parts)

Editor's Note: The following are excerpts from the forthcoming book, "Imelda Unmasked," by the author, who served as media adviser to President and Mrs. Marcos. She was based at the Maharlika Broadcasting Station.

I WROTE THIS ENTRY ON MY DIARY on Feb. 24, 1986:

"A bomb had just exploded somewhere on the roof of the Palace. On the second floor where the residence and offices were located, the large wooden chandeliers swayed precariously. The hardwood floors of the Ceremonial Hall heaved.

The chairs were in disarray and the thick curtains dividing the Hall from the receiving lounge were drawn. It was dark and deserted except for a few Palace guards who stood by the exits.

"They scampered toward President Marcos' study and shouted at me to take cover. But where could I go? I ran with REBEL/A16

THE MILITARY

Why the cannons did not fire at EDSA

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(First of two parts)

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And after President Marcos quit Malacañang, it was my father who cleared the grounds of all the bombs that Maj. Wyndo Ver had

WHY/A16

FORECAST: At 2 p.m. yesterday, a low pressure area was estimated at 220 km. Southwest of Southern Mindanao. The diffused tail-end of a cold front was over extreme Northern Luzon.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CYRIL BONHOMME, PDI RESEARCH/02/11/04

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2006

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Metro Manila | Partly Cloudy | Partly Cloudy |
| Baguio | Partly Cloudy | Partly Cloudy |
| Tuguegarao | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Legazpi | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Cebu | Partly Cloudy | Partly Cloudy |
| Tacloban | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Oslo, Sorsogon | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Tuguegarao | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Laguna | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Cagayan de Oro | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |
| Davao | Cloudy with Rain | Cloudy with Rain |

EO 464 makes GMA quasi-dictator—Joker

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WOULD RULE in a "quasi-dictatorship" and the senators would be "castrated" if the Supreme Court sustains Executive Order No. 464, maverick administration Sen. Joker Arroyo warned yesterday.

Arroyo said the high court's scheduled hearing today of a petition questioning the constitutionality of the order, which bars government, military and police officials from testifying in Congressional investigations without the President's permission, was a matter of "life and death" for the Senate.

The senator, who would orally argue the case for the Senate, said that a judicial ratification of EO 464 "would result in a quasi-dictatorship because the President can rule without having to think of Congress and Congress can't make laws to curtail presidential excesses."

"This is the danger of EO 464. That's why I said this is a life-and-death thing for the Senate," he added during a news briefing.

"Remember that no President of the Philippines has ever dared curtail the right of Congress to invite Cabinet members to appear and explain their acutuations in the department or to get information from them. Only President GMA has done that."

EO 464 has been a major flashpoint for confrontation between the Senate and Malacañang since it was issued in September.

If upheld by the Supreme Court, the order would render the senators powerless to inquire into anomalies and pass legislation, Arroyo said.

"If the EO 464 is sustained, I think it will castrate the Senate, in the vernacular 'parang kinapun,' and that is very dangerous

because we will be nothing more than eunuchs," he said.

"If this is granted, we're practically futile. What will we do? How can we enact legislation without a hearing because the President will not allow the Cabinet members to appear? How can we enact laws if we can't get information because the President will tell the Cabinet members not to produce the information that we need?"

"We have to rely on the Executive to make laws. That is why the partnership of the Executive and the Senate or Congress is indispensable. EO 464 effectively cuts that relationship."

The hearing of the case comes more than a week after the row between the executive and legislative branches flared anew after Press Secretary Ignacio Buncye and officials of the Department of Interior and Local Governments skipped the Senate budget hearings on Feb. 8, invoking EO 464.

This prompted the senators to file an urgent motion with the high court to resolve its petition.

Arroyo said that the members of the administration-dominated House of Representatives would likewise be emasculated by the ratification of EO 464.

"It will, but the House is willing to be castrated anyway... We don't want to be castrated, but the House, if they want to be castrated, fine. We won't agree to be castrated. Who wants to be castrated? We lose our masculinity," he said.



BACK TO EDSA

Former DepEd Secretary Butch Abad (from left), Rep. Risa Hontiveros, former DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman, Ronald Llamas of Laban ng Masa and Karen Tanada announce the holding of a huge protest rally on Wednesday to mark the first day of the EDSA People Power Revolt 20 years ago.

Minority starts own campaign vs Cha-cha

By Norman Bordadora

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE MINORITY yesterday started their own signature campaign to derail the Charter change train started last week by House Speaker Jose De Venecia.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero of Sorsogon and Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez authored the resolution now being routed among members of the House minority and those who signed the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo in July.

"Give us one to two weeks to gather the signatures," Escudero told reporters at the House minority's weekly news conference.

Escudero and his colleagues in the minority are courting the signatures of at least 42 congressmen to prevent the House majority from getting the 195 signatures that De Venecia and pro-Cha-cha congressmen need to satisfy what they think is a Constitutional requirement to hasten Charter revisions in Congress.

Last week, De Venecia started gathering signatures to secure the 195 needed to immediately embark on Charter revision.

"We have some members of the (Liberal Party). We may even have a solid (showing from the Nacionalista Party) and some members of the (Nationalist People's Coalition)," said Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla of the minority's chances of thwarting Cha-cha.

PhilSports gate electrified – VACC

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Margaux C. Ortiz

SOME OF THE VICTIMS OF THE stampede at PhilSports Arena in Pasig City during the anniversary of the "Wowowee" television show more than two weeks ago may have been injured or killed by electrocution much earlier as guards had allegedly charged a gate and steel barriers with electricity prior to the melees, a private anti-crime group reported yesterday.

The new allegation is part of a report the group Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption submitted to the National Bureau of Investigation after reading it out aloud to a group of about 50 survivors who showed up at the stadium yesterday. The VACC has set up a Complaint Desk in front of one of the gates.

VACC founder and head Dante Jimenez said that his group's report

was based on affidavits submitted to it by 105 survivors, five of whom had lost relatives in the stampede.

In light of these testimonies, Jimenez said the VACC was urging the families to agree to an exhumation of the bodies of their deceased relatives so autopsies could be performed to determine if electrocution had indeed occurred.

The report also accused the television network ABS-CBN of asking families who lost relatives to sign a waiver to absolve the network of any liability in exchange for financial assistance.

"This is to show to all of you that the system is rolling, that we are doing something," Jimenez told the survivors who showed up at the Complaint Desk. He said the desk, set up last week, would be open for one more week to accommodate families who had to attend to the burial of their loved ones first.

VACC had earlier threatened to

file a class suit against those who would be found liable for the stampede. But yesterday Jimenez said the group's legal team was still evaluating their legal strategies.

Before listening to the report, the survivors first lit red and white candles on the slope where more than 70 persons were killed on Feb. 4, during what should have been a grand celebration of Wowowee's first anniversary.

Asked if she was interested to file a case against the program organizers, Teresita Ancheta, 66, whose 70-year-old sister Manuela Ara was among those killed, replied she had not yet made up her mind.

VACC volunteer Lloyd Cervantes said some relatives had signed waivers provided by ABS-CBN.

"The victims were under trauma when they signed the waivers. That will be questionable," VACC lawyer Pete Principe said.

NEWSBRIEFS

Misuri case remanded to DOJ

THE MAKATI REGIONAL TRIAL COURT HAS REMANDED the rebellion case filed against jailed Moro rebel leader Nur Misuri and his seven co-accused for a re-investigation to the Department of Justice. In an order issued Friday, Makati RTC Branch 138 Judge Sixto Marella Jr. suspended for 60 days court proceedings on the rebellion case lodged against Misuri and seven others for allegedly spurring the 2001 Jolo uprising, where some 100 people were killed. Marella noted that a 2002 order by the Municipal Trial Court of Jolo, Sulu and a Dec. 2003 resolution by then DOJ Sec. Simeon Datumanong were still pending. Both ordered the determination of probable cause on the rebellion charges.

Terra V. Quisumbing

Meralco appeals SC ruling

THE LOPEZ-OWNED MANILA ELECTRIC COMPANY (Meralco) and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) yesterday appealed a recent Supreme Court ruling voiding Meralco's 13.27 centavo power rate hike. In separate motions, Meralco and the ERC asked the court to set aside its Feb. 2 ruling. In its decision, the SC said the ERC in approving the increase of Meralco's generation charge from P 3.1886 kilowatt hour to P 3.3213 per kWh at the time, had committed "grave abuse of discretion." Meralco claimed that "the implementation of the decision of the court would result in severe repercussions to the entire electric industry and to the public in general, a situation which could not have been contemplated by the framers of the law (Electric Power Industry Reform Act)." Armand H. Macaraig

Imelda foregoes HK trip

FORMER FIRST LADY IMELDA R. MARCOS YESTERDAY INFORMED the Sandiganbayan that she would forego her medical treatment in Hong Kong to enable her to visit and help victims of the mudslide stricken town of Saint Bernard, in Southern Leyte. "I'm foregoing my trip to Hong Kong but I will go to (Southern) Leyte instead," she told reporters. "I'll try although I know it's very dangerous because it's raining. I'm a Leyteña, I know my way," Mrs. Marcos said, adding that she was deeply saddened by what happened. The Sandiganbayan earlier allowed Mrs. Marcos to travel to Hong Kong and seek alternative medical treatment for her cough and ailing knees. Mrs. Marcos was allowed a two-week stay in the former British colony from Feb. 7 to Feb. 21.

Nelson F. Flores

Pinoy hostage in Nigeria safe

THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN NIGERIA SAID YESTERDAY that the Filipino national and eight other expatriates held hostage by armed militants from a barge in the Niger Delta "are all in good health and are being treated well by their captors." In a press statement, Philippine Ambassador to Abuja, Masaranga Umpa, said that the barge operator, Willibar Group, relayed this information to the embassy. Aside from the Filipino national, three Americans, two Egyptians, two Thais, and a Briton were snatched while they were on a pipe-laying barge in the Niger Delta by a militant group that had declared "total war" on all foreign oil interests. DFA Undersecretary Esteban Conejos, Jr. said. The DFA withheld the Filipino worker's identity pending ongoing negotiations for the release of the hostages.

Niko Diaz

Free-Erap offer a trap – Pimentel

By Philip C. Tuba

SENATE MINORITY AQUILINO PIMENTEL Jr. said yesterday that Malacañang's offer to broker the temporary release of former President Joseph Estrada was intended to dissuade Estrada from supporting opposition groups that are consolidating against the administration.

Pimentel said he suspected that the offer made by Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor was a "trial balloon" and that Estrada was right in turning it down, "believing it was a trap and another political gimmick of the administration."

He said the offer "should not be taken seriously" unless it came directly from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Why are they now telling Mr. Estrada that they can do something to secure his temporary liberty?" Pimentel said in a statement.

"Weren't they always saying before that it was the policy of Malacañang not to interfere in the court case against the former President because they respect the independence of the judiciary?"

Estrada is under arrest at his residence in Tanay, Rizal while undergoing trial on plunder before the Sandiganbayan.

Pimentel said the offer could be a trial balloon since Defensor made it public even before it could be presented to Estrada. "The Palace was apparently only testing the waters," he said.

Defensor earlier disclosed that three top religious leaders were willing to serve as guarantors for Estrada if the latter was placed under their recognition.

He said the Palace would not oppose the arrangement.

"Why is Secretary Defensor, whose credibility is doubtful, the one saying so many things about the offer? If this is the idea of President Arroyo, why has she not said anything in favor of the proposal?" Pimentel said.

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5 Abus killed in clash

GOVERNMENT TROOPS killed five Abu Sayyaf members in a clash in Basilan on Monday, a military official said yesterday.

Col. Darwin Guerra, the commander of the army battalion in the area, said an army patrol battled a band of Abu Sayyaf rebels near the town of Tuburan in the early morning.

The troops recovered the bodies of five gunmen after an hour-long firefight in which four soldiers were wounded, he said. The casualties were airlifted to a military hospital in Zamboanga.

The Abu Sayyaf has waged a 15-year campaign of bombings and kidnappings in Mindanao. US and Filipino intelligence officials say the group was set up with seed money from Osama bin Laden, the leader of the al-Qaida network.

On Monday, annual military exercises started involving troops from the Philippines and the United States, which has been providing counter-terrorist training to Filipino troops. AFP

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| Innova 2.5 G A/T | 100,000 | 85,532 | 58,900 | 46,909 | 33,474 | 27,010 | 23,337 |
| Innova 2.0 G A/T | 100,000 | 80,041 | 55,118 | 43,900 | 31,327 | 25,278 | 21,830 |
| Innova 2.5 G M/T | 100,000 | 79,881 | 54,571 | 43,703 | 31,106 | 25,164 | 21,740 |
| Innova 2.0 G M/T | 100,000 | 75,090 | 51,709 | 41,187 | 29,381 | 23,715 | 20,437 |
| Innova 2.5 E M/T | 100,000 | 70,949 | 46,858 | 38,917 | 27,771 | 22,409 | 19,358 |
| Innova 2.5 J M/T | 100,000 | 82,937 | 43,341 | 34,527 | 24,638 | 19,851 | 17,172 |
| Innova 2.0 J M/T | 100,000 | 58,436 | 40,241 | 32,060 | 22,878 | 18,460 | 15,944 |

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Blasts rock Malacañang, Makati; grenade found in QC

From page A1

idential Security Group (PSG), who rushed to the scene minutes after the incident, immediately said that the explosion was not caused by a bomb.

Bangit said the explosion could have been caused by chemicals found in a plastic garbage trolley.

Lacquer thinner

Later, at a news conference, Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said that initial findings by explosive experts showed that the explosion was caused by lacquer thinner that was ignited by a lit cigarette or a burning object.

"This is a result of a chemical reaction," Defensor told reporters five hours after the explosion.

Defensor said the initial PSG report showed "there is no indication or elements that will show that this was an improvised explosive device."

But he was not ruling out that the explosion was an accident or was done intentionally.

Based on the still initial findings, Defensor said the explosion could be part of destabilization attempts against the government.

"As to the individuals who were there, who were involved, the security there and other parallel investigations, we haven't done that yet," he said.

Emergency meeting

Ms Arroyo convened an emergency meeting with select Cabinet members to discuss the explosion.

The meeting came ahead of the President's meeting with the National Security Council scheduled for today.

The explosion shattered the

green garbage trolley and scattered the trash, mostly dried leaves. It also broke a branch and frayed leaves of a dwarf coconut tree.

The plastic trash bin was placed in the area by 58-year-old Palace gardener Florentino Caris at around 11 a.m.

A co-worker, who agreed to speak only if he was not identified, said that Caris and other gardeners took their lunch break at that time and resumed work by 1 p.m.

The co-worker said Caris was assigned to the eastern side of the Palace grounds and had used the trash bin to gather leaves.

Caris has been working in Malacañang for 30 years. He was taken in by the PSG for questioning and his superiors did not make him available for interview.

K-9 team

Bearing heavy firearms, PSG guards immediately cordoned the area as two K-9 bomb sniffing dogs were deployed to detect any trace of bomb elements.

Minutes later, explosive experts from the Western Police District in Manila helped in collecting debris for forensic investigation.

"There are no indications that there are explosives based on the reaction of the bomb (sniffing) dogs," Bangit told reporters.

Very minor explosion

"Let us not give this incident any more meaning than it really is, a very minor explosion," Government Media Secretary George Remonde, who was the first Palace official on the scene, told reporters.

He said he heard the explosion from his new office at the New Executive Building, less than half a kilometer away.

It was Remonde who told reporters that the blast site was



THE REMAINS from a mysterious explosion in the Malacañang grounds are examined by the Presidential Security Group, which so far is being explained as having been caused by a toxic mix of chemicals inside a garbage can.

UNILORIN

near a marker put up by the International Peace Movement. The white marker's message reads "May Peace Prevail on Earth."

A witness described the blast as similar to a "21-man gun salute."

Another witness, Nora, who works at the cooperative store near the RTVM office, said the store shook. She said she and other employees ran to the spot where the blast occurred and found smoke coming from the garbage bin.

Fear and panic

Hours before a news conference at the Palace, Defensor told the Inquirer and a television interviewer that the Palace explosion and the discovery of explo-

sives around Metro Manila yesterday could be the work of some group out to "create fear and panic" among the people.

He said the explosion was also meant to "sow intrigue" in the PSG, which is tasked with protecting the President and Malacañang.

But Defensor took back his earlier statement saying that it was based on the initial report that a bomb had caused the explosion.

Movement of people

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who was attending the thanksgiving lunch with officials of the IPO, said he did not hear the blast and only got wind of it when someone sent him a text message. Gonzalez said that at the emer-

gency meeting, security matters were discussed, including the movement of people from the provinces to Metro Manila apparently in preparation for the protest rallies marking the 20th anniversary of People Power I this week.

They also discussed threats from rightist groups but the justice secretary said the military was in control.

Ping pong ball

An hour after the explosion rocked Malacañang, another jolted a residential area in Makati City.

What looked like a harmless ping pong ball exploded in a vacant lot at the corner of M. Reyes and Jerry Streets in Barangay Pio del Pilar in Makati City at around

1:30 p.m. yesterday, injuring a girl. Chief Insp. Manuel Santos, chief of the Makati Police Department's Police Community Precinct 4, said the ping pong ball turned out to be an improvised explosive device, which had been filled with gunpowder and shrapnel.

The victim was taken to the Hospital ng Makati for treatment of gashes on her legs. Santos said the girl's wounds were mostly shallow cuts due to the shrapnel.

So loud

"The sound was so loud, that's why my neighbors went out of their houses to see what happened," said Romy Reyes, 55, a longtime resident.

In Quezon City, an M26 fragmentation grenade was discovered at the National Printing Office with its safety pin missing.

A nurse identified as Josephine Coguin saw the "round, light-green metallic object" in front of the NPO main office on Edsa corner NIA Road at 6:55 a.m.

Investigators believed whoever left the grenade had intended to set it off, because the safety pin had been removed.

Earlier this year, the government said there had been unsuccessful efforts by unidentified groups to recruit military units to launch a coup against the President.

Ms Arroyo survived a brief military uprising by more than 200 soldiers who took over the country's financial district in Makati in July 2003. Last year, the President also survived an impeachment complaint launched by the opposition, which accused her of stealing the May 2004 election. With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Tessa V. Quiñones, DJ Yap and AFP

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Malacañang, Manila

Her Excellency,

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is an important commodity for most households and the continuing increase in the price thereof is one of public concern. With the passage of Republic Act No. 8479, otherwise known as the Downstream Oil Deregulation Act of 1998, the independent or new players offer prices reasonably lower than those of the oil majors. To date, about 25% of the market share are LPG brands of the independent players. The oil majors, however, want to stifle competition and, in effect, deprive the consumers of the choice of purchasing the LPG brand that appeals to them.

LPG trading is peculiar in that a consumer who purchases LPG did not have to buy the same brand of the cylinder he owns but is required to surrender an LPG cylinder, whether of the same brand or another brand. Because the total market share of the independent players is already significant, LPG cylinders of the independent players are transferred to the oil majors and vice-versa. During the time of DOE Secretary Vincent Perez, discussions to provide mechanism for LPG cylinder exchange and swapping was pursued because LPG cylinder exchange in fact occur. Even as the oil majors through their representatives participated in the series of discussions, there was refusal to sign the draft Memorandum of Agreement. Ms. Zenaida Monsada, Director of the Oil Industry Management Bureau had presented the so-called Thai model of cylinder exchange and swapping as an alternative but had not taken further action. There has been no further meeting that has been called on the matter by the incumbent DOE Secretary.

The LPG brands acquired by the independent players in the course of trading had been the subject of flag down by law enforcement agencies, raids of the establishment of the independent players, and various cases filed before government agencies. The sole purpose thereof is to paralyze the operations of these independent players. The long arm of the law is used to oppress and not to promote government policy competition. Serious efforts of the independent players to find an equitable and long-term solution have been unsuccessful.

Even the establishment of an LPG cylinder maintenance fund to be shouldered by the independent players have been curiously turned down. The money to purchase new cylinders and repair dilapidated ones was volunteered by independent players, with oil majors as collecting agency only, but the latter has not shown any interest in helping the industry..

The existence of the independent players, as going concerns, are now under threat, and the only direction is for the oil majors to regain an oligopoly of the LPG sector. The trend toward liberalization and free competition is undermined. Unless the appropriate government agencies take immediate measures to address this problem, the consuming public will suffer from having to limit their purchases from the oil majors, without recourse to reasonably priced LPG products offered by independent players.

Aside from such deprivation to the consuming public, thousands who depend on their livelihood from the independent players stand to lose their employment or sources of income.

We appeal for positive action by her Excellency on this matter.

LPG Marketer's Association
(LPGMA)
LPG Refillers Association
(LPGRA)

Series of explosive protests until GMA quits, says group

From page A1

Impostor President."

Accidental?

Reformist AFP (YOUNG and RAFF) said "the explosive protest activities will continue and even escalate until Gloria Arroyo leaves the presidency and departs from Malacañang Palace."

But the Young Officers Union of the new generation (YOUNG) distanced itself from the statement of the YOUNG and RAFF.

'Gov't did it'

"That's fake. Maybe that's theirs [the government's]," said the source from the YOUNG, who asked not to be named.

The source from the YOUNG did not want to be identified because the group was supposed to be involved in clandestine operations directed at Ms Arroyo's ouster. The source has spoken on behalf of the YOUNG since the group issued its first statement mid-last year.

Previous statements by the YOUNG were signed by a certain Lt. Col. Arsenio Alcantara, an obvious pseudonym.

The source also denied that his group had linked up with the YOUNG and RAFF, which were unheard of until yesterday.

"Maybe they're creating a scenario to justify the declaration of a state of emergency," said the source.

Unconfirmed

Also yesterday, a man claiming to be 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, one of the four Magdalo rebel officers who escaped from an Army detention facility on Jan. 17, was interviewed over RMN radio.

But it was not confirmed whether the caller was really San Juan. The caller did not sound like San Juan.

San Juan was interviewed over ABS-CBN shortly after he and three others escaped. At the time he said he and the others were out to oust the President, but he never resorted to name-calling.

In the interview over RMN yesterday, the caller claiming to be San Juan referred to the President as a "monster" and warned his group would be "taking action before the end of February."

In its statement, the YOUNG and RAFF called on all members of the Cabinet to resign immediately or "they shall become part of the explosive protest that will increase in degree in the coming days."

"We likewise call on all generals and officers of the AFP and PNP whom Gloria Arroyo has not totally corrupted to withdraw their support for her to join us as we definitely move to remove this

think this is the same group that threatened me in the past. I don't even know if the group exists or if it is a genuine organization," said Defensor.

Defensor belittled the YOUNG and RAFF as he raised serious doubts about the capability of the group to carry out its threat.

"We love our people, especially those who suffered so much hunger and poverty. We shall endeavor to deliver our people from the corruption of our traditional politicians, the treason of our leaders, the immorality of those in government and the insensitivity of the Filipino elite so that our generation and the generations to come will have a brighter future," they said.

RP eyes new security accord with the US

THE PHILIPPINES IS NEGOTIATING A MORE modern security arrangement with the United States to cover militants, bird flu, piracy, natural disasters and other threats, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said yesterday.

The US has been a major source of military aid for the poorly funded armed forces in the form of training and hardware such as rifles, gunboats and helicopters.

Washington has poured in more than \$300 million in security assistance since 2000, excluding funds to build roads, bridges, water systems and schools in poor communities.

Cruz said new threats had emerged since the early 1950s when the Philippines signed a mutual defense treaty with the US to align itself against the threat of communism.

"One clear threat that has emerged is terrorism," Cruz told Reuters in an interview. "It will be more fitting and proper and more effective if we have a mechanism and framework that will address the emerging threats."

The military has been fighting communist and Muslim insurrections since the late 1960s and, more recently, the influx and influence of regional militants linked to al Qaeda.

Cruz, who was President Macapagal-Arroyo's lawyer before she named him defense secretary in August 2004, said Manila also must contend with transnational crime, disaster management and the spread of diseases such as bird flu.

He did not specify when negotiations for the new pact would wrap up, but officials in his department said they expected the agreement, supplementing the existing security treaty, to be ready for signing by April.

One official said the arrangement would also expand the role of other agencies engaged in security work, such as the justice, interior, foreign affairs and national security departments.

Cruz said he was also studying status of forces agreements used by the likes of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as templates for similar pacts Manila is seeking with Australia and several of its Southeast Asian neighbors.

"I am a lawyer with experience in criminal jurisdiction and law," he said. "I think it's important the Philippines comes up with an agreement that respects the criminal jurisdiction and sovereignty of Filipinos."

He said the future security pact would be consistent with the Philippine constitution and laws to avoid a repeat of the controversy generated by a rape case against four US Marines after they had taken part in military exercises last year.

Philippine and US troops hold an average of 20 war games and small-unit training exercises every year to test military readiness plans against an external attack in the Pacific.

The presence of US troops is covered by a separate pact, the Visiting Forces Agreement

signed in 1998 after the Philippine Senate terminated Washington's leases for military bases in 1991.

Beyond training and advising

Philippine troops, US soldiers have played big roles in disaster relief.

Some 3,000 of the 5,000 US troops

now taking part in annual war games

were diverted at the weekend to a village in Southern Leyte buried by a collapsed mountainside after weeks of rain.

Reuters



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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bin Laden vows never to be taken alive

CAIRO, EGYPT—OSAMA BIN LADEN PROMISED never to be captured alive and declared the US had resorted to the same “barbaric” tactics used by Saddam Hussein, according to an audiotape purportedly by the al-Qaida leader that was posted Monday on a militant website.

The tape appeared to be a complete version of one that was first broadcast Jan. 19 on Al-Jazeera, the pan-Arab satellite channel, in which Bin Laden offered the United States a long-term truce but also said his al-Qaida terror network would soon launch a fresh attack on American soil.

“I have sworn to only live free. Even if I find bitter the taste of

death, I don’t want to die humiliated or deceived,” Bin Laden said, in the 11-minute-26-second tape.

In drawing the comparison to American military behavior in Iraq to that of Saddam, the speaker said:

“The jihad is continuing with strength, for Allah be all the credit, despite all the barbarity, the repressive steps taken by the American Army and its agents, to the extent

that there is no longer any mentionable difference between this criminality and the criminality of Saddam.”

By using that language to describe Saddam, Bin Laden appeared to deny assertions by the Bush administration that the former Iraqi leader had ties to al-Qaida—ties that were given as one rationale for invading Iraq.

Bin Laden also denied Bush administration assertions that it was better to fight terrorists in Iraq than on US soil.

“The war against America and its allies has not remained confined to Iraq as he (Bush) claims, but rather Iraq has become a point of attraction and recruitment of qualified

forces,” the speaker said.

“What’s more, the mujahideen, by the grace of Allah, have been able to penetrate time after time all the security procedures undertaken by the oppressive countries of the alliance as evidence by what you have seen, in terms of bombings in the capital of the most important European states.”

The tape’s release in January came days after a US airstrike in Pakistan that was targeting Bin Laden’s deputy, Ayman al-Zawahri, and reportedly killed four leading al-Qaida figures, including possibly al-Zawahri’s son-in-law. There was no mention of the attack on the segments that were broadcast.

In the full tape that was posted

Monday, Bin Laden engaged in renewed propaganda, mocking US President George Bush’s aircraft carrier declaration in April 2003 that major conflict in Iraq had ended.

“The Pentagon’s figures indicate an increase in the number of your killed and injured in addition to the massive material losses, not to mention the collapse of troop morale and the increase of the suicide rates among them,” the Bin Laden voice said.

Speaking directly to the American people, the speaker said:

“You can rescue whatever you can from this hell. The solution is in your hands, if their (US troops) situation matters to you at all.”

It was the first tape from the al-

Qaida leader in more than a year—the longest period without a message since the Sept. 11 2001 suicide hijackings in the United States.

The CIA last month authenticated the voice on the initial recording as that of Bin Laden, an agency official told The Associated Press at the time. The al-Qaida leader is believed to be hiding in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The last audiotape purported to be from Bin Laden was broadcast in December 2004 by Al-Jazeera. In that recording, he endorsed Abu Musab al-Zarqawi as his deputy in Iraq and called for a boycott of Iraqi elections.

AP

Israel cuts off money flow to Palestinians

GAZA—ISRAEL HALTED ITS MONTHLY transfer of millions of dollars to the Palestinian Authority ahead of the formation of a Hamas-led Cabinet, a move President Mahmoud Abbas said had plunged the Palestinians into a “financial crisis.”

In an apparent nod to international calls to avoid adding to Palestinian hardship, interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert’s Cabinet decided against implementing tougher sanctions Israeli defense officials had proposed to try to weaken Hamas.

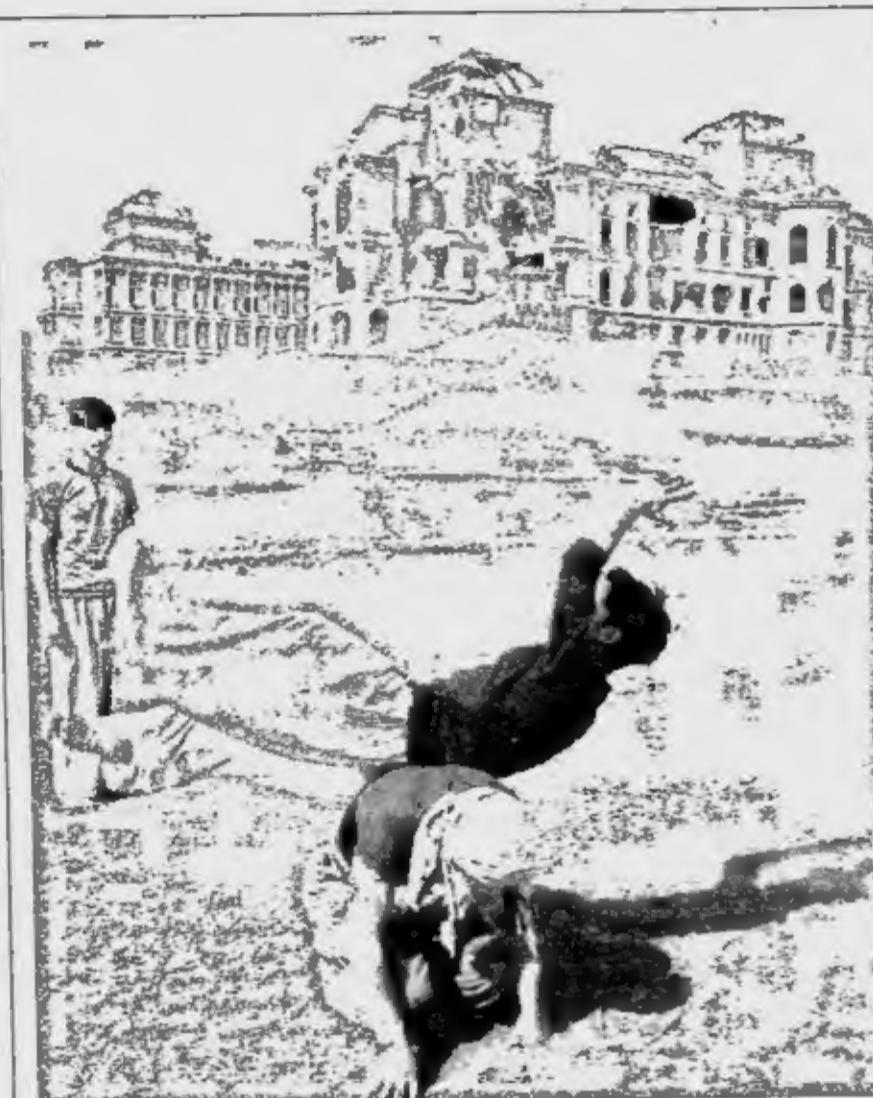
“Unfortunately, the pressures have begun and the support and the aid started to decrease ... therefore we are currently in a real financial crisis,” Abbas told reporters in Gaza, ahead of a meeting this week with Hamas leaders to discuss a unity Cabinet.

Israel and the United States have called on other nations to boycott Hamas, which crushed Abbas’s long-dominant Fatah faction in a Jan. 25 election, winning 74 parliamentary seats, until it disarms and recognizes the Jewish state and interim peace deals.

The United States, the Jewish state’s biggest ally, has asked the Palestinian Authority to return \$50 million of its own aid to ensure it does not reach Hamas. The Islamic group is sworn to Israel’s destruction.

Israeli defense ministry officials last week recommended stopping all tax revenue transfers and proposed barring all Palestinians from working in Israel and from traveling between Gaza and the West Bank across Israeli territory.

On Sunday, the Cabinet announced a permanent halt to the monthly transfer of about \$50 million in tax revenues Israel collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority each month. Reuters



LINGERING SCAR

Afghan youths perform gymnastics on a patch of grass in front of the ruined Darulaman Palace, in Kabul, Feb. 26. Many sites of historical interest across the Central Asian nation still bear the scars of civil wars and fighting from the last 25 years. AP

Former cult leader fit for trial in appeal, say psychiatrists



ASAHIRO in Nov. 30, 1989 photo

TOKYO—PSYCHIATRISTS HAVE CONCLUDED a former cult leader sentenced to die for the deadly 1995 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subways is mentally fit to stand trial if his appeal goes ahead, a court official said Monday.

Shoko Asahara, the former guru of the Aum Shinrikyo cult, was convicted in 2004 and sentenced to hang in the gas assault and other attacks that killed a total of 27 people and injured thousands of others.

Asahara frequently dozed off, mumbled incoherently and made bizarre gestures during his first trial, which lasted eight years. His lawyers have appealed the ruling, arguing that he was unfit for trial and demanding psychiatric tests.

But court-appointed psychiatrists submitted a report to the Tokyo High Court on Monday saying Asahara “has not lost the ability to stand trial,” a court official said Monday on condition of

anonymity, citing protocol.

If the court rules Asahara is competent, his appeal still could be thrown out because the defense team missed a deadline for filing an explanation of why they were appealing, news reports said. The lawyers have said they missed the deadline because they could not communicate with Asahara.

Asahara lawyer Aldo Matsushita said in an e-mail statement he could not comment on the court decision because he had not read the evaluation report. Another defense team member, Takeshi Matsui, could not be reached.

Asahara was convicted of masterminding the Tokyo assault, in which members of the doomsday cult released deadly sarin gas on trains converging on the government district in central Tokyo.

The attack killed 12 people, sent thousands to the hospital and paralyzed

the center of the city.

Asahara was also convicted of plotting a 1994 gas attack in the central Japanese city of Matsumoto that killed seven people, the kidnapping and murder of an anticlerical lawyer and his family, and other slayings.

Asahara’s defense has claimed the guru, who was born Chizuo Matsumoto, suffers from pathological mental stress caused by confinement. That assessment was backed up on Monday by an expert who examined him recently.

“Matsumoto does not respond when spoken to, or even when touched—he’s incapable of any form of communication whatsoever,” said Masaaki Noda, a psychopathology expert who visited the suspect with the defense team last month.

“His condition is deteriorating steadily. There is no way he is fit to stand trial,” Noda said.



STAR ON PARADE

Lili, a one-year-old English Bulldog waits to walk in the 13th annual Beggin’ Strips Barkus Pet Parade, Feb. 19 in the Soulard neighborhood of St. Louis. AP

Astronomers list likely stars that can support ET life

By Jean-Louis Santini

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI—US ASTRONOMERS have come up with a short list of five stars in the Milky Way galaxy that are most likely to support extraterrestrial life.

The stars were chosen based on a number of criteria, including size, composition, age and color, that would make them similar to the sun and enable planets resembling Earth to orbit them, said Margaret Turnbull of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Turnbull’s list would enable astronomers to point telescopes toward the stars with the most potential of sending radio signals from extraterrestrial life.

“These are places I would want to

live if God were to put our planet around another star,” Turnbull said on Saturday at a conference of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in St. Louis, Missouri.

The list was developed to guide the use of Nasa’s new powerful orbiting observatory, or the Terrestrial Planet Finder, which will search for Earth-like planets.

“There are 400 billion stars in the galaxy, and obviously we are not going to point the Terrestrial Planet Finder at every one of them,” Turnbull said.

Among the most promising sun-like stars was beta CVn, about 26 light years from Earth in the constellation Canes Venatici. One light year is equivalent to 9.5 billion kilometers.

Turnbull and her colleagues initially

set out to select a dozen stars that were the most promising and sufficiently close to the Earth’s solar system.

In 2003, after a painstaking study of close to 120,000 stars, the team of astronomers came up with a catalogue of 129 “habitable stellar systems.”

Another star on the short list, Pegasus 51, was made famous in 1995 when Swiss astronomers discovered the first planet outside the solar system. The giant planet resembling Jupiter orbits Pegasus 51.

A star named 16 sco, a popular target for planet searches, also made the list.

The star is located in the Scorpion constellation near the center of the Milky Way and is virtually a twin of the sun, according to Turnbull.

To be considered as potential homes for intelligent life to evolve, stars had to

be at least 3 billion years old.

Turnbull said the list was merely a starting point and it remained difficult to rank stars as more or less likely to shelter life.

“There are inevitable uncertainties in how we understand these stars,” she said. “If I took the top 100, it would be very difficult for me to tell which is the best.”

The list will provide potential targets for the Terrestrial Planet Finder, which was originally set to be launched in 2016 but has been postponed due to federal budget constraints.

Research for the list was sponsored by Nasa and the privately funded Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (Seti) organization. The institute was created in 1984 by the renowned astronomer Carl Sagan, who died in 1996.

French envoy says Guantanamo an ‘embarrassment’

WASHINGTON—THE BRITISH, FRENCH AND German ambassadors to Washington said Sunday that the United States must close its Guantanamo “war on terror” detention camp which the French envoy called “an embarrassment.”

The ambassadors stepped up international pressure on US authorities after a report by UN human rights experts called for the camp at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba to be shut as soon as possible.

“Guantanamo is an embarrassment, and so it has to be solved one way or the other,” said French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte during an appearance by the three envoys on CNN television.

GMA, FVR to attend separate EDSA rites

By Christine O. Avendaño
and Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO AND former President Fidel Ramos will attend separate events to mark the 20th anniversary of EDSA I this week.

There is no rift, according to Palace officials. The two leaders just have different schedules.

In the program of activities organized by Malacafang, Ms Arroyo and Ramos were supposed to attend wreath-laying rites at the Li-bingang ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City on Feb. 22.

But Ramos said he had been invited to several photo exhibits on EDSA I all over Metro Manila on the same day, "thus, it would be appropriate if the President would be the main guest of the event," the former President told Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Presidential Adviser for Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio.

Ms Arroyo will be assisted in the wreath-laying rites by Defense Sec. Avelino Cruz, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Generoso Seneca, and members of the newly-reorganized EDSA People Power Commission.

Asked if Ramos was trying to distance himself from Ms Arroyo, Ermita said the two leaders had different schedules for the Feb. 22 to 25 celebration. Unfortunately, there would be no occasion for them to be on the same stage in any of the events.

Ermita said Ramos was attending the Feb. 25 event at the People Power Monument with Vice President Noli de Castro. Ms Arroyo, on the other hand, would be in Bulacan, inaugurating housing projects for soldiers.

Claudio said Ramos' program of activities had been set before he got his invitation to attend the Palace-organized events.

Rep. Imee Marcos, meanwhile, believes EDSA I 20 years ago made life worse for the people.

The daughter of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos yesterday said that EDSA I opened the flood gates of extra-legal and extra-constitutional change.

"EDSA I is a failure! Corruption only became worse and EDSA failed to cleanse the grime in the government bureaucracy," Marcos said in a statement five days before the country marks the 20th year of her family's flight from Malacafang.

"Poverty is at its worse and basic services that government should provide for the people are now lost," she added.

Marcos said that unlike the time of her father, criminality and terror now haunt Filipinos. The late president always took pride in the way Martial Law brought discipline to what he called the New Society, she added.

She said that even the country's self-sufficiency in food production suffered after the Marcoses left the country.

Ocean park to rise at Luneta Boardwalk

By Leila B. Salaverria

A MALAYSIAN-CHINESE CONSORTIUM HAS obtained the go-signal of the Board of Investments to build an ocean park at the Luneta Boardwalk in Manila at a cost of P1.1 billion.

Robert Dean Barbers, general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority, said the project's approval was another step toward bringing in revenues for the country and generating jobs for Filipinos.

The China Oceanus Group Ltd. (COGL), the consortium which will build the ocean park, will lease the 1.2 hectare Luneta Boardwalk at P16.5 million a year. The rental cost will then increase by 10 percent in succeeding years.

The ocean park is expected to generate some 2,000 jobs.

Barbers said the project would not entail any sovereign guarantee by the government.

The PTA and the COGL signed a memorandum of agreement in April last year for the construction of the ocean park.

Under the MOA, the PTA awarded the COGL a 25-year lease contract for the boardwalk, while the COGL agreed to shoulder the cost of constructing the ocean park.

The ocean park will feature a walk-through aquarium, a sea turtles area, a cactus garden and even a swimming area. The COGL also plans to build a plaza for special events and areas for shops and restaurants, and to develop the area fronting the boardwalk into a park.

The Luneta Boardwalk, located behind the Quirino Grandstand, was constructed after the issuance of Proclamation 69 dated Feb. 19, 1999, which required the PTA to convert portions of Manila Bay into special tourist zones.

Coalition vs child labor formed

A COALITION OF MORE THAN 30 GROUPS — from government agencies, nongovernment organizations, and people's and children's associations — will be launched on Feb. 23 at 1 p.m. at the Bulwagang Tandang Sora at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

The National Coalition Against Child Labor in Commercial Agriculture has appealed to all sectors to get involved in eradicating child labor.

"Like their peers, child laborers are entitled to basic rights — adequate parental care and guidance, the right to play, and leisure and cultural activities to enhance their physical and intellectual development, and to socialize with their peers for their social development," the coalition said.

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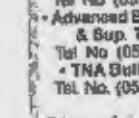
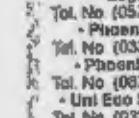
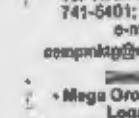
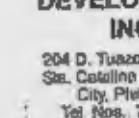
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17 Central Luzon villages 'high-risk'

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—AT LEAST 17 UPLAND villages in three Central Luzon provinces are at "high-risk" to landslides, according to the chief geologist of the regional Mines and Geosciences Bureau here.

Orlando Pineda identified the highly vulnerable communities as Patic, Caragsacan, Tanawan and Davil-Davilan in Dingalan town, Dimanayat and Diteki in San Luis town, Villa Maria in Maria Aurora town, Amper and Dina-dawan in Dipaculao town, all in Aurora; Labi in Bongabon town, Sawmill, South Poblacion, Malinao and Pantoc in Gabaldon town, all in Aurora; Villa Maria as "no man's land," meaning these were not suitable anymore for human settlement.

More than 100 people died in Patic and five others in Villa Maria at the height of Typhoon Winnie in 2004 when debris from the mountains rolled down and the rivers there changed course, burying the villages.

Pineda said the risks in these villages were determined after a geo-hazard mapping last year.

Straddling the Central Luzon

parts of the Sierra Madre and Zambales mountain ranges, these communities experienced landslides following four successive typhoons in November and December 2004.

MGB officials declared Patic and Villa Maria as "no man's lands," meaning these were not suitable anymore for human settlement.

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Richard Dayucos, village cap-

tain of Bulacan experienced damming last year and should also guard against a repeat of a flash flood.

According to him, Villa Marle, Diteki and Dimanayat face isolation as these are bounded by two rivers bulging now with debris. Rescue and relief missions there are possible only through air operations.

On Monday Pineda advised Governor Bellaflores Argao-Castillo of Aurora, Tomas Jason II of Nueva Ecija, Jose Yap of Tarlac and Josefina de la Cruz of Bulacan to urge vigilance among the residents living in those areas.

Other parts of the country were also found to be landslide-prone.

In Sitio Calambuan, Tayasan town, continuous rains brought a landslide. The site is 90 km north of Dumaguete City.

Richard Dayucos, village cap-

tain of Ilaya, said no one was reported hurt although the landslide damaged crops and pieces of property in a three-hectare area.

The landslide happened on Friday, two hours before the landslide in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte.

Residents of Ilaya Village have moved out of the place since the 1980s when a river overflowed and brought devastation.

The landslide brought boulders and white silica sand down a 100-meter slope and turned a portion of the Ilaya River into a lake 100 meters wide.

Dario Amistoso, a resident of Barangay Ilaya, said he could hear the landslide from his house some 200 meters away. Tonette Oregos, PDI Central Luzon Desk with a report from Alex Pol, PDI Visayas Bureau.

High risk areas (Highly vulnerable communities)

Nueva Vizcaya:

Labi in Bongabon town, Sawmill, South Poblacion, Malinao and Pantoc in Gabaldon town.

Tarlac:

Maamol, Sula and Lubigan in San Jose town.

Bulacan:

San Miguel

Straddling the Central Luzon parts of the Sierra Madre and Zambales mountain ranges, these communities experienced landslides following four successive typhoons in November and December 2004.

4 Central Mindanao areas tagged landslide-prone

KORONADAL CITY—AT LEAST four areas had been identified landslide-prone in Central Mindanao, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Central Mindanao said on Monday.

Jaime Flores, MGB division chief, said these include Barangay Ned in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, site of an oil exploration project and Barangay Kerman in T'boli, also in South Cotabato, where sluice mining has been going on for months now.

Flores said other areas where landslides could possibly occur are the Daguana mountain range, which stretches from Maasin, Sarangani to Isulan, Sultan Kudarat and Malabag, a border town of Davao del Sur and Sarangani.

South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Fuentes said the provincial disaster coordinating council also identified some areas of Banga town, particularly those near the Allay Valley as landslide-prone areas.

In Butuan City, the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) in Caraga said flood-induced landslides could also hit the region.

"Aside from high rainfall, our region has become a landslide-prone area because of forest denudation," Salvador Estudillo, OCD-Caraga chief, said.

He did not specify though which areas of the province are most likely to be hit by mudslides.

Caraga is composed of the two Surigao provinces, Agusan del Sur and Agusan del Norte.

Estudillo said that with the reality, OCD has already formulated disaster management plans with local government units.

In Pagadian City a church-based environmental group urged the government to close existing mining operations and to cancel mining application permits in Zamboanga Peninsula following Saturday's landslide that killed five people in a mining area in Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur.

EarthLink chair Rudy Arpon said the onslaught of the La Niña phenomenon poses great danger to communities living near existing mining sites. Jeffrey Maiten, Michael Sarcauga and Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Maid's kin suspect foul play in Singapore death

Murder suspect slain
CAGAYAN CITY—The dream of overseas Filipino worker Haidee de la Calzada was to build a decent house for her eight brothers and sisters and to help finance their schooling.

But that's gone now.

Haidee, 28, the third youngest among nine children of Raymundo and Susana de la Calzada, returned to Marabulog Dos here in a coffin on Feb. 11 after she reportedly committed suicide by jumping from the eighth floor of her employer's condominium in Singapore.

She was only on her fourth day

of her two-year contract when she died. Her parents and relatives could not believe she committed suicide.

"It is impossible that her head is intact and she has no fractures, except for bruises and contusions (apparently inflicted by somebody)," her father Raymundo said. Her uncle, Francisco Ibujo, said there were "glaring inconsistencies" in the reports on her death in the Singaporean and Philippine embassies.

He asked the National Bureau of Investigation to look into the case. A few hours before her al-

leged suicide, Haidee sent text messages to her relatives in Cagayan City, reporting some "suspicious acts and advances" by her male employer, it was learned.

Some of the text messages, according to her relatives, included: "I found his actions strange. He tried to give me money but I refused."

She added: "Sorry, I panicked. My employer explained his side."

"I escaped. I didn't like to go back to my employer. He had evil motives against me."

Her sister, Lenny, said Haidee had reported that her employer "used psychological, mental, physical, and emotional methods of harassing her."

She said her sister's mobile phone went off after sending the text messages. A few hours later, a call from the Philippine Embassy said Haidee committed suicide. Manuela Pefia, regional manager of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration in Cagayan Valley, said the victim's family would be given financial help. Villanor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Protesters want death for Danish cartoonist

Suspected robber slain

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The chief of police of Dasmariñas, Cavite shot dead a robber who tried to seize the service firearm of a policeman while he was being brought to prison inside the police station on Feb. 12. Police said Bernardo Bugal, a resident of Barangay Area 1, Dasmariñas, was about to be brought inside the police jail at 1 a.m. when he suddenly grabbed the 9 mm pistol of his guard. Dasmariñas police chief Chief Insp. Mario Reyes saw the incident and immediately shot the suspect. Bugal tried to shoot back but was again shot by Reyes. The suspect was immediately brought to the nearby De La Salle Hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Search for 7 stopped

ILIOILO CITY—The Coast Guard has called off search and rescue operations for seven persons on board a motor banca that disappeared almost two weeks ago between the islands of Semiraya and Boracay. Capt. Arturo Olavarria, Coast Guard commander in Western Visayas, said they were focusing their efforts on gathering information. The outrigger boat Nining Ilt Sibulan Island in Caluya town, Antique Feb. 3 enroute to Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro. It was expected to arrive by noon the next day but did not reach its destination.

Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau

Illegal fishers nabbed

TALITAY, Maguindanao—The local government on Feb. 16 started a crackdown on fisherman using illegal methods in the Liguanan Marsh and burned fishing implements in public. Mayor Kabale Sumagka said local authorities seized eight-volt wet cell batteries, copper wires and zinc sinkers used by illegal inland fishers in this part of the 420,000-hectare marsh. Sumagka said 45 more of such implements were surrendered by their owners and were also publicly burned.



Mark Matien, PDI Mindanao Bureau

3 rebels slain in clash

DAVAO CITY—Three communist rebels were killed in a clash with government soldiers in Talangod, Davao del Norte, the military reported Monday. Maj. Jose Cuervo III, military spokesperson for Southern Mindanao, said soldiers from the 73rd Infantry Battalion were on patrol in a remote village of Talangod when they clashed upon Now People's Army (NPA) rebels. He said the military suffered no casualty but a civilian was wounded. Cuervo said the bodies of the slain rebels were brought to the military headquarters in Camp Paracan here.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

MARAWI CITY—ANGRY MUSLIMS in Lanao del Sur demanded death for two Danish journalists who caused the publication of 12 Muhammad cartoons September last year that later spread to other countries in Europe and around the world.

Amid chants of "Allahu Akbar" by over 3,000 protesters, a local Muslim cleric read a local fatwa (edict), addressed to Flemming Rose, cultural editor, and Carsten Juste, editor in chief, of Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten.

He further said that "reconciliation and public official apology" cannot assuage the injury brought by the drawings to the Islamic faithful.

"The only solution is their (Rose and Juste's) death," Mimbawalag declared.

The religious leader also said a "declaration of Jihad" against the newspapers which published the cartoons "is justifiable."

Hadjji Abdullah Dalidig, chair of the Muslim Multi-sectoral Movement for Peace and Development (MMPD), said they "are willing to die for Prophet Muhammad."

"Believing Muslims love Muhammad more than anything in this world, more than ourselves and families, hence, we are ready to offer our lives to refute those who malign him," Dalidig said.

In a manifesto, the MMPD said the "blasphemous car-

toons" smack of "racist provocation and religious intolerance."

Amid the highly-charged atmosphere of the protest action, more moderate voices emerged.

Sheikh Saaduddin Alauya told the INQUIRER in an interview that the two Danish journalists must sincerely ask for forgiveness for having published the offensive materials and such apology "must be circulated as widely as the circulation of the cartoons."

From merely expressing regret for the furor caused by the cartoons, Carsten issued an apol-

ogy late last month but only for offending people with the publication and not for the act of publishing.

He maintained that on the basis of freedom of expression, he cannot apologize for causing the cartoons' publication.

Former Marawi city councilor Abed Dinang branded Carsten's justification as "malicious freedom of expression."

Saying "freedom of expression is not a license to attack a religion," Dalidig characterize the act as "irresponsible journalism."

He said the newspaper's posture on the matter is "equated with European arrogance and Islamophobia" and an indication of "growing Western hostility of intolerance and fear of Muslims and Islam in general."

The protesters also demanded official condemnation by the Danish government "on the blasphemy" committed by the two journalists and their newspaper.

In a huddle with reporters after his speech, Dalidig asked governments of all countries where the cartoons are published and circulated to express condemnation.

Ryan Rosario, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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Too much water

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT LA NIÑA IS BRINGING more rains to the country, resulting in more water for drinking and household purposes as well as for irrigation and agriculture. The bad news, according to Pagaña chief Graciano Yumul, is that La Niña is producing "too much water in the wrong place at the wrong time." It has been inducing more typhoons, floods and more frequent heavy rains since November last

EDITORIAL

La Niña (Spanish for "The Little Girl") is meteorologically the flip side of the more well-known El Niño. The term refers to the extensive cooling of the central and eastern Pacific. This packs the atmosphere with more energy and increases the frequency of heavy rain and thunderstorms. Places like north Australia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and some parts of the Philippines will have more cloud and more rain. Typically, La Niña lasts from three to six months, but it could extend to 12 months. Its effects could be aggravated by global warming which has raised sea surface temperature, packing marine air with extra loads of moisture.

From January to Feb. 12, some parts of the Philippines received 300 times more than the average rainfall, triggering flash floods and mudslides in the Visayas and Mindanao. So far, its most fatal and destructive effect has been felt in Southern Leyte, where as many as 1,800 people may have been killed and thousands of others have been left homeless.

The weather bureau said the eastern seaboard of the country would be hardest hit by La Niña. This includes Cagayan Valley, Isabela, Aurora, the Bicol provinces, Southern Leyte, Leyte, Samar, Agusan del Sur and Norte, and Davao Oriental. These provinces particularly will have to prepare for stronger and more destructive typhoons because of La Niña.

During the La Niña episode in 1998-1999, typhoon "Norming" struck the Visayas, killing 17 people, leaving 24 missing and destroying more than P240 million worth of crops and property. In February 1999, flash floods in Agusan del Sur and the Caraga region killed 39 people and left more than 30,000 others homeless.

The nation has to prepare for both the beneficial and destructive effects of La Niña. The government would do well to rush the construction of water impoundment sites where the heavy rains could be collected and stored for the dry months. Mini irrigation systems will have to be built so that they could use the abundant water for agriculture. Farmers, particularly in eastern Luzon, have to be persuaded to switch to crops suitable for the high rainfall expected in the coming months.

It's too late to start a reforestation program in provinces like Southern Leyte where many mountains and hills have been denuded by illegal loggers, kaingin makers as well as legitimate farmers who cut down trees so that they could plant coconut trees. But something has to be done to avoid a repetition of the mudslide in Southern Leyte that has taken a horrendous toll in human lives and property damage. One inexpensive solution is the large-scale use of the soil erosion control net or coconet invented by Filipino engineer Justino Arboleda. The invention recently won the first prize in the First World Challenge contest sponsored by BBC World television in London. We have the material for it in abundance, and it can be produced quickly in bulk.

Only recently, the Office of Civil Defense said that the government was preparing a nationwide flood mitigation plan that could be completed in six months. Priority should be given to the provinces on the eastern seaboard that could be hit hardest by the typhoons and heavy rainfall that is brought about by La Niña.

In the meantime, an efficient alarm system has to be devised so that people in areas where the possibility of mudslides occurring is very high can be evacuated as quickly as possible at the first sign of impending trouble. Better yet, these people should be relocated to other, safer places while something is being done to shore up the mountains and hills that are prone to landslides and mudslides.

The government and the people cannot remain complacent and reactive all the time, and act only after weather disturbances like typhoons, protracted heavy rainfall and massive flooding have occurred. Now that La Niña is upon us, they have to take urgent measures to avoid the loss of human lives and costly damage to crops, public infrastructure and private property.



Grand memory

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



How did you guys lose control?" he asked him.

"A very powerful man in those days, Benitez was visibly drunk and slurred his words. "Nuns. How could we know those f---ing nuns were going to sit on the ballot boxes?" he said before launching into a crude string of epithets. He took another gulp of his scotch and added: there was no way out for Marcos. "We don't know what to do," he said before lurching off into the night."

The country never dug itself out from the abyss that began under Marcos," Neumann continues. Avaricious moneyed elites returned with a vengeance. Giddy with its interventions, the military is restive in the barracks. And President Arroyo is mired, seeking safety nets like constitutional blue-pencil, to survive, much less govern.

People Power restored civil liberties and gave rise to a vibrant press, Neumann says. But it didn't usher in sustained structural reform. Lip service prevails. "On what should be a grand anniversary, it is difficult to find much to rejoice in."

But hope lies elsewhere. People today no longer ask if People Power failed. Rather, the question is: Where did we, as ordinary citizens, shortchange Edsa?

There's a clearer perception now that hope lies not in "the man on a white charger." Can you imagine Erap, Joma, Fidel or Ping as "liberator"?

Hope of living up to People Power's vision is found in ordinary people doing the right things, despite the odds. "How could we know those f---ing nuns were going to sit on the ballot boxes," as Benitez put it.

People Power is not a single cataclysmic event. It is a drawn-out process of people governing themselves, thereby leading the "leaders" of today. And "the struggle of man against power," as Czech novelist Milan Kundera wrote, is [also] the struggle against forgetting."

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Hearts and mind

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



ignacio Bunye had an interesting reply to Fidel Ramos' complaint. Ramos had earlier fumed about government preparations for the 20th anniversary of Edsa not according it the proper fanfare it deserved. Edsa, he said, was much admired around the world. "Why is it that here in our own beloved Philippines, where it all started, we should be trying to downgrade it, diminish it and marginalize it?"

Bunye replied that there was nothing wrong with the low-key plans for the 20th anniversary. "The real meaning of Edsa resides in the national memory and in the hearts and minds of every Filipino and not in pomp and ceremony or rhetoric." That is all very well, except for one thing: Only recently we celebrated a victory with much pomp, ceremony and rhetoric.

That was Manny Pacquiao's victory over Erik Morales in Las Vegas last month. Such was the importance given to the event the First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and the gentleman-farmer Chavit Singson leaped to the stage to bathe in Pacquiao's glory, a thing that sparked an epidemic of boozing in local movie houses where the fight was shown. Such was the earthshaking significance of the event a motorcycle that wound through the streets of Manila was thrown for Pacquiao when he came home. Manila Mayor Lito Atienza was at his side—he would be there from Las Vegas to the plane to Naga to Manila City Hall to Malacañang and all the way to Quezon City. Sonny Belmonte country. Talk of Brokeback Mountain!

Near my son's school in Mandaluyong, I see a big sign that says, "Bayani ka Manny!" I don't know how many other places in Metro Manila sport similar proclamations.

I figure Pacquiao deserved the accolades. But I have not seen one sign this coming 20th anniversary of Edsa that says, "Bayani ka Cory" or more to the point, "Bayani ka, Juan de la Cruz." Let us forget, though we always do, the thing is called People Power and not Cory Power, or Sin Power, or Ramos Power, or heaven forbid, Enrile Power. But I did not hear Bunye or his boss, GMA—who swiftly incorpo-

rated complaining about the lack of fanfare lavished upon Edsa. Edsa is more than a glorious history, it is a raging memory. Edsa is more than a lost artifact, it is a continuing presence. Edsa is not there to serve as a PR vehicle for Ramos, notwithstanding that he keeps trying to lay claim to it like a panhandler lays claim to a gold site. His claim to Edsa disappeared the day he went to GMA's side last July to try to prop up a usurper who stole the vote.

What is Edsa? Edsa is about ending a regime of tyranny and building one of enlightenment.

What is Edsa? Edsa is about ending a regime of rotteness and corruption and building one of goodness and decency. What is Edsa? Edsa is about ending a regime of lying, cheating and stealing and breathing in the air of honesty, integrity and service to the people.

If that is Edsa, then Ramos never really understood it. None of this is to say we may not recall him at all in the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of Edsa. All of it is to say that we may not make him its living symbol. Indeed, all of it is to say we may not associate in its deepest sense so sublime a concept with so crass an operator, so life-affirming an idea with so life-denying a power-broker.

The real meaning of Edsa does lie in the heart and mind. They are the force that keeps magnificence alive. They are the force that makes the past present, the spirit flesh, the word deed. Bunye and his boss may be assured that the rest of us at least intend to keep the spirit of Edsa alive in our hearts and minds even as we move to celebrate its 20th anniversary with all the color and resplendence we can muster. Who knows? Maybe in celebrating the furious way we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Philippine Independence in 1998, when flags fluttered and patriotic fervor soared, we might rekindle much of the passion and heroism we've lost over the years.

Indeed, who knows? Maybe by flocking to the Edsa Shrine this Saturday to mark the 20th anniversary of the ouster of a tyrant, we might end up ousting another.

Be there.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2006

OPINION



Senate should pass 'Billion Trees Act' fast

OUR PROFOUND CONDOLENCE TO THE victims of the deadly mudslides in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte, and the families still waiting for news on the fate of their relatives who remain buried beneath the mud. The terrible disaster has touched the whole world, and help in various forms has been pouring in from many countries. The government's response has been fast and quick, with President Macapagal-Arroyo and Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, chair of the National Disaster Control Council, staying on top of the aid and relief operations. Various citizens' groups have also been mobilizing help.

To lay church leader and TV personality Baby Nebraska, the best help is prayer for all the victims of recent natural and man-made disasters. Baby has appealed to CBCP president Archbishop Angel Lagdameo to set up a National Day of Prayer that will serve as balm to the spiritual wounds of the victims and heal various conflicts on the eve of the 20th anniversary of Edsa I. Baby has appealed to the bishops to open churches for vigils before the Blessed Sacrament through the next few days until the Edsa anniversary. Truly, nothing brings together our people as adversity does.

But the mudslides have hit not only Southern Leyte but also various parts of Mindanao and the Visayas as well as Luzon's eastern seaboard. And from what the experts tell us, mudslides will present a constant danger to our countrymen owing to the expected La Niña phenomenon and the poor state of many mountains around the country that are now unable to hold the soil after being logged heavily.

Environmentalists now cite as one crucial factor the failure of Congress to pass until now the "One Billion Trees Act." Agusan del Norte Rep. Leovigilio Bansag, chair of the House committee on natural resources, recently pointed out that this bill, which seeks to reforest our denuded mountains on a massive scale as well as jumpstart the rural economies by providing a million jobs, was filed in the 12th Congress and again in the current one. But it is one of the bills that the Senate, in its pre-

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

cipation with investigations, has sat on for years. To be filed and re-filed has been the fate of this crucial bill in the House. It's time the Senate acted on it to prevent the disasters we are now witnessing. The fate of this bill is the best argument for a unicameral legislature. Having two chambers that are always in gridlock results in very slow legislation.

Speaking of Charter change, attacks on Speaker Jose de Venecia by senators have become personal lately, which may be indication that the latter may be panicking over the House-initiated campaign supported by local government officials and NGOs to change the Constitution.

Sen. Aquilino Primoletti was quoted as saying recently that JDV has not done anything significant, but JDV should be able to answer that one. More interesting, and something I happen to know about, was former Sen. Francisco Tatad's accusation that JDV was being dishonest in granting the Congressional Medal of Achievement to local and foreign leaders (one was given to the PNOC during my husband's presidency, when it was the Global Energy Award in 2003) because that award was never approved by the Senate. Moreover, Tatad alleged that the award was being bestowed on the basis of Resolution 453, but the latter deals with another topic altogether (a ban on overseas employment).

In fairness to JDV and the House, however, I have witnessed a number of those awarding ceremonies and the citations always makes it clear the honor is being conferred by the House alone. I also noted the House secretary general's explanation that Resolution 453, which established the award, was approved in the 12th

Congress, whereas the resolution with the same number Tatad referred to was passed in the 13th Congress. Those are two different resolutions altogether. In Tatad's hurry to blame the House, he stumbled.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz who stated in saying that the government has begun mapping out the towns that are prone to floods and landslides, and once this is finished, he'll ask local government officials and the media to help disseminate the information to the citizens. But I'm afraid dissemination is not enough. What government ought to do is relocate towns that are at high risk and forcibly keep the people out of the danger zones. Beyond providing blankets, warm clothes, food rations and makeshift shelters, the financial aid now pouring in from both local and foreign sources should be used to build new communities away from the danger areas. This would make the financial aid from our generous donors more meaningful. Otherwise, this disaster will visit the country with greater regularity.

Now for some good news. Fil-American film producer Piñ Clemente, an Oscar nominee this year, has signed up designer Rajo Laurel of the talented Laurel clan and Los Angeles-based Fil-Am designer David Tupaz to coordinate on making the two gowns she'll wear to the Oscars. These two designers join our own Monique Lhuillier of the Cebu clan in being designer to the stars. Monique, the daughter of the still-lovely Amparo Llamas Lhuillier and her husband Michel, brother of Ambassador to Rome Philippe Lhuillier, has been dressing up stars like Sharon Stone and academy-award winners and has become very famous. Over dinner in Rome last September, Ambassador Lhuillier's pretty wife, Edna, told us how once when she was shopping in LA, she presented her credit card and the sales lady recognized the name and started asking if she was related to Monique. The other sales ladies started to crowd around her, wanting to know more about Monique. Edna had the same experience in Milan, where the sales girls became curious when they learned that she is a Lhuillier.

A personal connection

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

You may send your new or clean used blankets, as well as other donations, to Runggitan Social Development Foundation Inc., Don V. dela Cruz Ave., Caintipawas, Tacloban City. Tel. No. 052-5235903.

Laureen, for her part, texted that apart from food and clothing, what the survivors need most right now are "light materials for construction," apparently for temporary shelter as all the houses in the barangay have been leveled. All donations will be channeled through St. Bernard Mayor Maria L. Jimenez, a supporter of Abanese! Pinay.

Those wishing to send cash, Laureen says, can directly deposit their donations to her account at the Allied Bank branch in Baybay, Leyte. Her account number is 0840740365, and I'm sure she'll acknowledge all donations with the proper receipts.

Friends with the Abanese! Pinay chapter in Cebu have also been mobilizing among their networks for aid to the landside survivors. Tess Fernandez of Lihok Pilipinas in Cebu writes that three Lihok staff members would be traveling to St. Bernard to distribute the goods they were able to collect.

The latest word they've gathered is that three other barangays in St. Bernard have been evacuated. Tess echoes the call for blankets and mats, as well as for toothbrushes, soap, toothpaste and sanitary napkins for the women survivors.

"THEY buried a generation today" is how the lead in a story about the funeral of schoolchildren who died in a school fire goes. A classic of newswriting, oft cited in journalism school, the sentence sums up

the magnitude of loss one feels when children die in large numbers in one fell swoop.

For the citizens of Guinsaugon, burying the next generation—the almost 200 students attending classes in the elementary school when it was buried beneath a mountain of mud—will take some time, as rescuers report that they have yet to reach any part of the school, dashing hopes of rescuing any possible survivors.

But it turns out that more than just the dreams and possibilities of a generation lie buried beneath the earth in Guinsaugon. A story on the barangay elementary school says the young people there were considered among the most gifted in St. Bernard, excelling in "math competitions and academic exams."

The story Volt Contreras tells is of dedicated teachers and bright students who, despite their poverty and the remote location of their barangay, managed to best their peers among the other elementary schools in St. Bernard and the province as a whole. Indeed, a local education official said the Guinsaugon students might have been reviewing for this year's division test, which covered such basic subjects as English, Math, Science and Makabayan (a combination of history and civics) a test they routinely excelled in.

SO TO the folk of Guinsaugon and St. Bernard—and of the rest of the country—the grief and shock over the disaster is compounded by a sense of great loss, not just of possibly over a thousand residents of the barangay, but of a generation of young people who held out so much promise and potential.

I think, too, of their mothers, many of whom were surely among the 80 supporters of Abanese! Pinay meeting in the school that morning and celebrating their solidarity and sisterhood.

I had felt sickened to the stomach when I first heard news of the mudslide, and was horrified when I beheld the initial news footage out of Guinsaugon. That initial shock has since worn off, replaced by grief for everyone—but especially the women and children—who didn't know what hit them that bright Friday morning.

stores, others operated sawmills and still others constructed many of the Western style office buildings and residences in Baguio. There were those who went into vegetable farming (before the war, 70 percent of the farms were Japanese owned), formed the Japanese Association, established a school and even engaged in the trucking business.

Many of these Japanese married local women, mostly Ibaloy, Kankanaey and Bontoc natives. Others came from Pangasinan, Ilocos and the Tagalog regions who had migrated to the Cordilleras or who came selling various commodities to the construction workers on Kennon. There was Felisa Esperanza, a vendor of *ingay* from Asia, who married Eiji Shimotsu whom she met on the construction site of the railroad tunnel in Tuba, Benguet, and Carolina Dumbi from Bontoc who met Hyojiro Ueda while selling fruits and vegetables to his bridge construction crew along the Chico River.

Regrettably, the war destroyed many lives, including the Japanese community in Baguio. Those who had sons in the Philippine-American army were tortured by the Japanese police.

After the Liberation, Japanese families were labeled "enemy aliens" and sent to detention camps. Others who retreated with the Japanese troops (a third died of illness and starvation) became prisoners of war. Upon their release, even their Philippine-born wives and children were tried for collaboration. They were cleared in 1948. But the Japanese men were repatriated to Japan, thus breaking up their families.

The author of the book, Cecile Afable, is the daughter of Teruji Okubo, a carpenter from Hiroshima, and Josefina Carito, an Ibaloy.

It was in 1972 that St. Theresia Union, a member of the Franciscan Order, began to gather data about the descendants of these early Japanese pioneers. This led to the formation of the Filipino-Japanese Foundation of Northern Luzon Inc. which published the book.

Closure

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

return to Japan. Most of us, therefore, had no idea of the role these Japanese pioneers played in the development of Baguio and nearby provinces or their participation in the construction of Kennon and Naguilian, which was done mostly by hand.

The book presents oral histories and photographs you haven't seen before (which shouldn't surprise us since most of the documents of the American occupation of this country is in the United States). Rare images were provided by former Baguio residents who now live in Japan and archival records in the US. Among these are photographs taken by Shosuke Puruya, a professional photographer who worked at Pine Studio in Baguio in the mid-1920s until he set up his own business, the Golden Light Studio in Bontoc Mines, and sent back photographs to his family in Japan where they miraculously survived the war. Incredibly, there were actually four Japanese studios on Session Road in those days before the war. So what other photographs exist?

Most history books published (if you've read enough of them) are a rehash of what you already know. Many times, the footnotes are more interesting than the text. But this particular book is a revelation. All these years, I thought Baguio meant typhoon or storm in the vernacular. Wouldn't you know its etymology is "bing," an aquatic fern that grows on the swampy bottom of the Guisad Valley? That's just one of the things you'll find out.

There were over a thousand Japanese who worked on Kennon Road and, when it was finished, many opted to stay behind. Some opened grocery

stores, others operated sawmills and still others

constructed many of the Western style office buildings and residences in Baguio.

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Valley? That's just one of the things you'll find out.

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Lonely together

I KNEW SHE WOULD EVENTUALLY POP THE QUESTION after watching Nova Villa ask John Lloyd Cruz the same question countless times in her favorite telenovela. And she finally did, one afternoon when I got home from school. "May boyfriend ka na ba?" my grandmother asked, her voice lifting, her expression uncannily like Nova Villa's. "Wala pa ha," I said. "Hindi ko naga-pa-imagine."

Kung paano

terrible at begin? Lola is finished.

Ugh. That wasn't

what I meant to say

at all. I like to think I

at least have some

idea of love, however

flawed or vague

Mills and Boon intro-

duced me to romance

back when I was in

20, I've been to enough

drinking sessions to witness several

declarations of love.

"I was about to say I can't even imagine how my parents got married when they were just about my age," told my Lola. Real, enduring commitment, that's what I can't imagine, I, whose great commitment is to follow the antics of the animal fat, pink starfish, Patrick.

Lola considered me thoughtfully, probably thinking of my afternoon cartoon viewing. "Innocent ka pa," she decided. She said it as if love were vulgar. Judging from historical romances and drunken revelations, I have to admit that love can get nasty.

Lola folded her hands over her belly and stared into the distance. I thought that it would come then: the stories she usually told after the marble table had been wiped and she had changed into

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Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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AB

MEGALOTTO 6/45

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Car theft suspects nabbed

By Nancy C. Carvajal

FOUR SUSPECTED CAR THIEVES WERE arrested at dawn yesterday after they were caught allegedly dismantling a pick-up in a dump in Malabon City.

Northern Police District director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said the suspects allegedly stole the red Ford pick-up of businessman Edgardo Carino, a resident of Mandaluyong City.

The vehicle, with plate number PDD 518,

was parked on Guerrero St., Mandaluyong City when it was reported stolen. The suspects were identified as Reynante Arzo, 26, Ian Boco, 34, both from the Welfareville compound in Mandaluyong; Jerry Marla, 32, and Benjamin Cebuano, 37, residents of Dumaguete Sito 6, Catmon, Malabon.

Bataoil said the car owner confirmed the recovered parts came from his pick-up. The victim said two of the suspects were known to him, Bataoil added. "Arzo and Boco were part-time drivers of the victims and could have du-

plicated the car key," Bataoil said.

Among the items recovered from the suspects were the engine chassis, stainless steel shell with back body, alternator, battery, air-conditioner, radiator and tires.

Bataoil said residents reported the ongoing illegal activity. "The residents saw the suspects dismantling the vehicle," the NPD chief said. The suspects were arrested by a team headed by Senior Insp. Carlos Dilag when they failed to show documents proving ownership of the vehicle.

Pasig police undergo values 'reeducation'

By Luigi A. del Puerto, Leila B. Salaverria and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE FORMER PASIG CITY POLICE CHIEF and his men will undergo a 15-day retraining program at the Subic Freeport Bay in Olongapo City. The 300-strong Pasig police force would go in groups, officials said.

Police spokesperson Sr. Supt. Samuel Pagtialo said PNP chief Arturo Lomibao wanted Senior Supt. Raul Medina to "lead his police force in the values and leadership training program," following the discovery of a "flea market" of illegal drugs near the Pasig police headquarters.

The Pasig one-stop shop for shabu addicts in Sitio Mapayapa in Barangay Sto. Tomas is less than a kilometer away from City Hall, and from the headquarters of both the Pasig City Police and the Eastern Police District (EPD).

A week after the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force based in Camp Crame raided the compound, Director Vidal Querol of the National Capital Regional Police Office relieved Medina, as well as the heads of the antimarcotics units of the EPD and Pasig City, from their posts.

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency also sacked its six-man team in Eastern Metro Manila that covers Pasig, Marikina, Mandaluyong and San Juan. Supt. Romeo Abaring is now acting chief of the Pasig City Police.

Meanwhile, Pasig Rep. Roberto Jaworski Jr. said yesterday he was verifying reports that the Pasig police's anti-illegal drugs division had been getting P1.2 million a month from the operations of the "shabu restaurants."

Jaworski had linked Pasig Mayor Vicente Eusebio earlier to the drug den operations.

"The amount received by the police is allegedly separate from that received by Pacman and the barangay," the congressman said at the Kapitan sa Maynila forum yesterday.

"Pacman" refers to the person allegedly collecting money from the drug operation for the city mayor's office. Investigators were shocked when Eusebio had the shanties in the area demolished days after the raid.

The mayor said he wanted to ensure illegal operations would not resume.

Jaworski said he would formally ask the Office of the Ombudsman to suspend Eusebio and would submit evidence to support his accusations.

Reacting to Jaworski's charges, Eusebio threatened to file a libel case against the congressman.

The mayor said he was open to any investigation, and laughed off Jaworski's allegations that he had a big man.

Jaworski is widely believed to be planning to run for mayor next year, while Eusebio is reportedly grooming his son Bobby to replace him.

15,000 feet for a sky jump. Some three decades ago, he also crossed rivers through zip lines as part of his ranger training.

For Sunday night's stunt, Querol had to go back to tugging that safety line for a brief refresher course on skills he had not tried for quite some time. "I did some body balancing and rappelling to brush up on my skills. Then I tried to find my center of gravity while suspended on air," he said.

Querol came to the event dressed for the part in an all-black Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) uniform, with a French helmet and goggles to boot.

"If you accept the challenge, just do your best," he said.

DJ Tap

Police director takes up 'extreme challenge'

By Tessa V. Quismundo

CALL IT EXTREME POLICE VISIBILITY

In a daring stunt no other man of his position has pulled off, National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) Director Vidal Querol crossed the Pasig River from 180 feet above the ground, with only cables supporting his flight.

"While I was up there, I knew I had to enjoy it. This is once in a lifetime opportunity," Querol said, visibly happy after completing his stunt around 10:25 p.m. Sunday night.

Among the first acts in a promotional Rexona billboard stunt show at the Edsa-Quintana intersection in Makati City,

Querol took off from the 160-foot-high billboard and crossed a descending 720-foot zip line traversing the width of Pasig River, from its Makati side to the Mandaluyong edge.

As he made the descent, Querol showed no fear of altitude, as he smiled and waved to the audience below. Upon touchdown, the NCRPO chief enthusiastically shook hands with spectators huddled by the bridge's safety balustrade.

High-altitude training in his youth paid off for the 55-year-old Querol who is more often seen on the ground, checking on his men and inspecting Metro Manila's commercial areas and checkpoints.

As a young skydiver, he had gone up to

METROBRIEFS

Same suspects?

THE SUSPECTS in a car theft incident in Parañaque City that killed Richard Capili, a 19-year-old nursing student, last Feb. 12 could be part of the group that pulled off a heist in a security agency in Pasay City on New Year's Eve according to Parañaque City police chief Supt. Ronald Esteban. Raymond Bongabong and Roberto Pepito were among the suspects identified by witnesses as the men who broke into the DAsia Security Agency in Pasay on Dec. 31. "Our witness, a security guard, identified Bongabong as one of the suspects who barged into the security agency," Supt. Danny Unico told the Inquirer. The robbers carted away 35 M-16 rifles, 15 shotguns, two handguns

and 15 bullet-proof vests. A canteen helper and a building security guard later identified Bongabong as the gunman in the killing of Capili. *Jacelyn R. Uy*

One more time

A 28-YEAR-OLD man lost his car to thieves after midnight yesterday in Quezon City. Terence Sy was about to board his black Mazda (plate number XSR-173) in front of a convenience store on Tomas Morato Avenue when three armed men got off a white Toyota Corolla, pointed their firearms at him, and punched him repeatedly before taking off with his car and cellular phone, according to P01 Gerald Maravilla, Kamuning police desk officer. *DJ Tap*

Leyte tragedy not God's doing

THE TRAGEDY THAT STRUCK BARANGAY Ginsaugon, St. Bernard, Southern Leyte, was an example of Mother Nature getting back at us for abusing her.

The mountain from which rocks and mud came sliding down into the barangay has been made bald obviously by illegal logging or slash-and-burn farming or *kamigin*.

The irony of it all is that the people who became victims of Nature's fury were not the ones who abused her. Many of the victims were children not yet capable of illegal logging and *kamigin*.

Floods and landslides are caused by the wanton cutting down of trees in our forests. The roots of trees absorb rainfall and prevent soil erosion. We used to have millions and millions of hectares of forests. Now only a few million hectares of forests remain. Loggers and slash-and-burn farmers destroyed our vast forests.

Greedy loggers didn't replace the trees they cut down. The loggers kept burning down trees to clear a part of the forest for their farm. After planting on the cleared area, the subsistence farmer looked for other areas to burn to make way for a new farm.

ON TARGET



Ramon Tulfo

God is being blamed by some people for the tragedy at Southern Leyte. Why did He allow children to be buried alive under tons of mud, they ask. Sad Maasin Bishop Precious Canillas: "Even in these most painful times, we believe that God continues to love us all, especially those who are severely affected."

The statement was uncalled for.

God loves everybody, the saints as well as the sinners. He doesn't punish us; we punish ourselves.

Tragedies that befall us are of our own making, not God's.

The law of karma doesn't make any distinctions. We reap what we sow. The irony of it is the innocent suffer more than the culprits.

Yesterday was a red-letter day for my brother Erwin and I. We received Medals for Distinguished Service for tipping off the authorities on the existence of the shabu den in Pasig City.

What Erwin and I did was no big deal. We just did what every civic-spirited citizen ought to do. The fight against crime is not the job of the police alone but of the citizenry. Without the participation of the citizenry, the fight against criminality will not succeed.

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF VALENZUELA
 Metropolitan Manila



Mayor SHERWIN GATCHALIAN
 is calling on all Valenzuelanos
 to share whatever they can to
 help the St. Bernard, Southern
 Leyte landslide victims.

Donations are accepted at the
 Valenzuela City Hall until Friday,
 February 24, 2006.

Please contact Ms. Venus Gaoiran or
 Ms. Marither Menia at 292-0211 for
 details.

Valenzuela,
 may DISPLINA!

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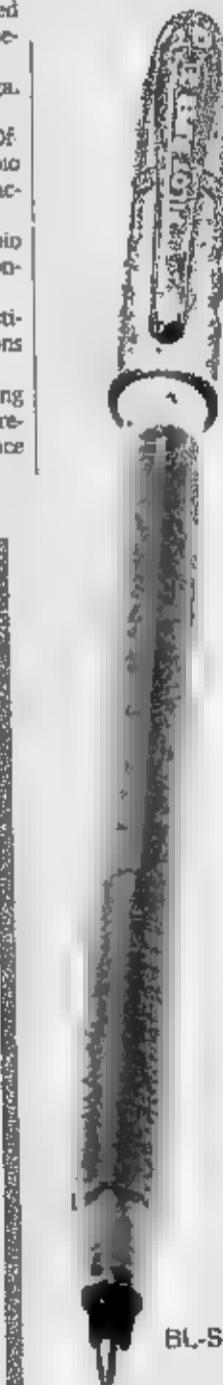
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THE PEOPLE

'Leaving on a jet plane' inspired air controllers

By Ben F. Romero III
(The writer is now assistant professor at St. Paul University in Quezon City.)

VERY FEW PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT THE SILENT YET SIGNIFICANT contribution of the technical personnel of the Bureau of Air Transportation (BAT), now the Air Transportation Office (ATO), in the triumph of EDSA I.

Planning to shut down airports to incoming and outgoing traffic in the event of an uprising was done even before in the aftermath of allegations of fraud committed by the regime during the snap election.

It was spearheaded by the Aero Mobile Service (AMS) personnel, where I used to be a supervisor, and had the tacit approval of some sympathetic section chiefs in spite of the risk of outright dismissal, or worse, incarceration.

We later informed officials of the

Philippine Air Traffic Controllers Association and the Organization of Philippine Airways Communications Specialists of our objective.

Our plan involved an intricate closure of the entire Philippine Air Traffic System, the effects of which were vicious, crippling and hazardous to international air navigation.

The Philippine Air Traffic System is operated by three technical groups: the Air Traffic Controllers, the Airways Communications and the Air Navigation Systems Specialists.

The staging ground for the closure would be AMS since its main function was to provide continuous HF and VHF communications to flight operations in the South East Asia and Central West Pacific regions.

The AMS was also the first line of contact for incoming international flights.

To avoid endangering international

air navigation, we planned to issue surreptitiously a notice to airmen that our communications facilities were not functioning and could put flights at risk.

No take-off, landing

The scheme would therefore force aircraft to avoid overfly and landing and take-off in the Philippines, particularly in major international airports such as Manila, Cebu, Davao and Zamboanga.

We then contacted the Corazon Aquino camp, advising them of our plan that could put additional pressure on Marcos.

The Aquino camp obviously relayed our plan to the rebels. On Day 2 of the EDSA Revolution, we received a call from Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile on a possible meeting to implement our plan. It did not materialize, but the Aquino people gave us the green light.

Returning to the Airways Facilities Complex, we immediately went to work.

So effective

So effective was the strategy that even pilots calling us on the assigned frequencies understood and bid us good luck—a manifestation that the plan was working.

Our correspondents in the aeronautical fixed stations in Honolulu in the East,

Udjung Pandang in the South, Naha in the North, Bangkok in the West were continually sending us very encouraging messages of support.

Heartwarming

That to us was simply amazing. Inquiries made through our land lines equally produced splendid results. Callers informing us that they have asked Marcos to go so flights can be restored were simply heartwarming.

On Day Three of the revolution, we received a call from Minister Enrile through the Manila Control Tower to open the Manila airways facilities as friendly forces from Zamboanga aboard a commandeered Philippine Airlines BAC111 would be coming to support the revolution.

Then a very welcome news was subsequently received from the Cojuangco camp, that we could resume normal operations—code name Juliet Delta had been accomplished. This was the code name we assigned to our mission, the international phonetic alphabet for John Denver and his popular song "Leaving on a Jet Plane."

That was what our mission was all about—to see Marcos leaving on a jet plane.

Did our plan pressure Marcos to finally leave? Does a ripple make waves?

PLDT España kept open lines to the world

By Luz T. Bunag

WHEN NEWS OF A military rebellion flashed around the world on Feb. 22, 1986, the international section of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was jammed with incoming and outgoing calls.

The PLDT office on España—one of two handling such calls—also became a magnet for a potential attack for troops seeking to disrupt vital communications with the outside world.

I was then PLDT's senior manager but I have since retired.

My main concern was relief for the 30-odd operators who had been working non-stop fielding calls, including those made by foreign reporters covering the Philippines.

I had rushed to the office and found out by the time I got there that people had converged in the area to protect the office. They said there were rumors that PLDT would be bombed. Barricades had been set up around the area and I had to plead with my people manning them to let me through.

When I got there, I found out that all the operators were in high spirits in spite of the hardship. They genuinely thought that they were contributing to ease the anxiety of people worried about their loved ones.

At around 6 p.m., I looked out the window and saw that thousands of people had gathered on España and surrounding streets to protect the installation. Teenagers set up camp around the PLDT perimeter, some brewing coffee.

I noticed the coffee was not enough for a lot of them. So I immediately instructed the operator who was accompanying me to get more coffee, sugar, milk and cans of biscuits from our supplies to be distributed to the people outside.

It was just the start of a long vigil that ended four days later. I guess it was our small contribution to the success of the People Power revolution.

How precious freedom is

By Pabito F. Sanidad Jr.
(The writer is now a 25-year-old law student.)

WHEN DEMOCRACY toppled the dictatorship, it was a shining and proud moment for the Filipinos.

Before People Power, when children of my age were busy playing with toys and staying home, I was on the streets, wearing my yellow Ninoy shirt beside my father.

My father then was one of the leaders of the opposition in northern Luzon. He

would bring me along with him whenever he spoke in rallies and when he would march on the streets in Baguio City.

Remembering those years makes me realize the many sacrifices the Filipino people endured for a right and just society. It makes one appreciate how precious the terms "democracy" and "freedom" truly mean.

I was proud to be a part of it. For those were moments which made the Filipino proud to be Filipino.

I gave light

From page A1
chanting and wearing yellow. Actually, from that day on, yellow became my favorite color.

It was so typical at my age that situations were explained similar to those in a storybook so they would be easier for children to comprehend.

I used to ask my parents what was going on and I was told that a big bad wolf was being thrown out in the woods, that Little Red Riding Hood must be saved and we are going to help the poor girl in our own little way.

Now, I finally understood my family's simple contribution to EDSA I that led us back to our democracy.

My parents were into handicrafts since the '70s and the industry was booming until the late '90s.

My dad told me that on the second day of the peaceful upsurge the renowned movie director Ben Cervantes made a television appeal for donation of any form of lighting that

would help the people to fight darkness and total blackout.

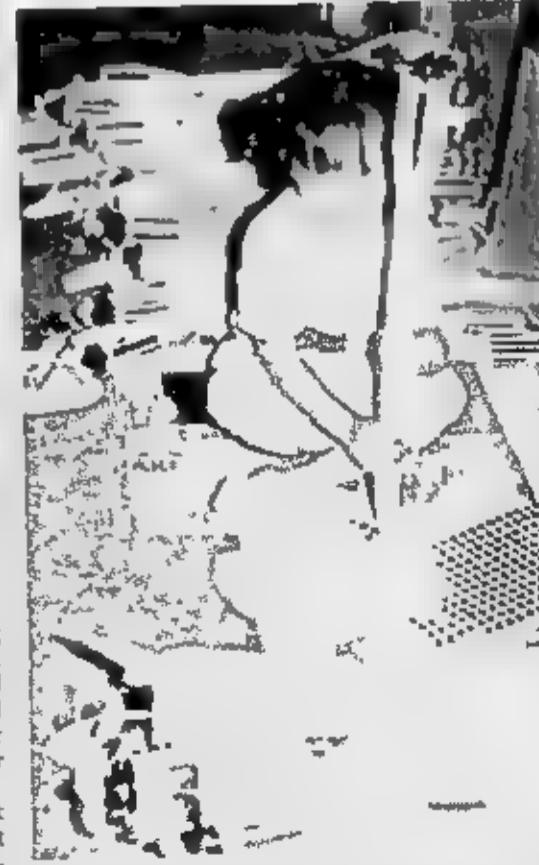
He said there was a possibility that power supply would be cut off and this could result in chaos and bloodshed.

When my dad heard this, he went to our warehouse and asked our employees and friends to gather and prepare bamboo torches.

I went with my parents to bring the torches to EDSA. I was so excited that I even wore Ninoy Aquino's yellow shirt.

We distributed the torches to the people in EDSA. I was even making the L (laban) sign, which I knew was Cory's trademark. I was chanting "Cory" as well. I did not fully understand it then but I knew I was fighting for something. It was for our democracy.

Our bamboo torches might not have brought down Marcos but they certainly helped some Filipinos to see light in the midst of darkness.



AT 6, Julie Garcia helps the family, who was into handicrafts, provide torches to light the darkness.

Kitchen brigade with no stove, water

From page A1

had run a catering service, I thought it would be a short-term task and I shanghaied my children to help out.

We were shown what once passed for a kitchen. There was no running water, stove or utensils there, much less food to cook.

Obviously, coup plotters don't really plan these things.

Somehow, 10 kilos of ground pork materialized, then two cases of pork and beans and some heads of cabbage. It was the first meal served to soldiers in the camp.

I made an appeal over Radio Veritas for help in the kitchen. The response was overwhelming. More volunteers came, as well as a truckload of firewood and 30 tubs of fish.

SMC donations

As the revolt progressed, more and more soldiers came over to our side such that we had to keep the kitchen going full time for 24 hours.

More food donations also came in. Amy Sison-Uichangco and her sister, the owner of Queens Supermarket,

donated a truckload of paper plates, plastic cups, spoons and forks. This did not last long.

I then asked the men who were with us to cut the banana plants around the camp to use the stalks and leaves for plates.

San Miguel Corp. made daily deliveries of distilled water and chickens, which were sent to Doty Coronel, who owned a bakery, for roasting. Someone donated a truckload of rice and another a truckload of eggs. There were candies, sandwiches, cookies and local pastries. Grounded airlines sent food.

More from Namfrei

A man came wearing a tie and a vest, not exactly a getup for a revolution. He said he was from the National Movement for Free Elections. He was set up at a corner of the kitchen and fried a whole truckload of eggs.

One can only look back wistfully at those four days when we rose to our best as a people. The common cause that we forged in those days made us do wonderful and extraordinary things.

My dad told me that on the second day of the peaceful upsurge the renowned movie director Ben Cervantes made a television appeal for donation of any form of lighting that

Bishop Soc slams gov't, EDSA I 'pimps, rapists'



From page A1

The two officials had then just broken away from Marcos after serving in the strongman's inner circle for many years.

40 thieves back

Villegas said moving out of the powerful Metropolitan See of Manila to the low-key diocese in Bataan had afforded him a new outsider's perspective on EDSA I.

He said one thing he had realized was that Filipinos reaped only "bad politics, politics without moral principles, [and] transactional politics" from those who directly benefited from EDSA I and II.

"We must never allow any politician to ever tamper with people power again," he said.

"The hope of our nation is not in the politician-beneficiaries of people power. [They] have betrayed the trust of the people. We drove away Ali Baba but the 40 thieves have taken over! It is very sad. It is very disheartening," he said.

Villegas stressed that people power was not to blame, but the "transactional politics" that had abused it.

Not enough members

"The innocent youthful beauty of People Power has been raped," he said. "People Power is the victim, not the culprit."

The bishop expressed disdain over the idea of another regime change through People Power.

"I do not believe anymore in using People Power to change governments," he said, pointing out that such a mode was now a thing of the past.

"Let ambitious politicians not entertain thoughts of using People Power to get into office again," he said.

Last year, there were calls for People Power to unseat Ms Arroyo, the beneficiary of EDSA II in January 2001. But the numbers were not enough, even at the height of the clamor for her resignation, amid continued doubts over the legitimacy of her victory in the 2004 election.

Observers attributed the failure, not to popular support for Ms Arroyo, but to a public tired

of yet another political upheaval.

Villegas said the woes born from EDSA I and II should teach Filipinos that "people power without inner conversion will not lead us to the Promised Land but to the valley of darkness."

"The aim of People Power is change of heart—conversion. We changed presidents but forgot to change within," he said.

Empowerment of the poor

The emerging face of the desired inner change is the empowerment of the poor through cooperatives, micro-financing, free education, housing projects and nutrition programs, Villegas said.

gas said.

"People Power, raped by politicians, is ready to stand up and start anew," he said, adding:

"May God spare People Power from immoral politics. People Power can be betrayed, raped and abused, but because People Power is from God, it will live on, in another form, with another face, but remaining always the same—for the good of God's people and in the name of peace."

Villegas also said that even if it had been "blackened by human abuse," the peaceful revolt would remain beautiful—"the splendor of God who walks among His people."

Christian V. Esguerra

BISHOP VILLEGRAS: Spare People Power from immoral politics. It's the victim, not the culprit.

PHOTO

By DJ Yap

LOOSE VOLCANIC ROCKS, THICK soil drenched in La Niña rains, and the Philippine fault line traversing the town of St. Bernard—these are ingredients for a recipe for disaster, according to University of the Philippines geologist.

The scientist conducted a field study of Southern Leyte geology in April 2003 with her students.

The place is a "hazard," said Carla Dimalanta, an associate professor at UP National Institute of Geological Sciences.

First, the volcanic rocks or "pyroclastic materials," present in the mountainous slopes were not "consolidated," meaning, they were not hard enough, she said.

"They're slightly loose, so when they get saturated with water, they become unstable. It's easy for the

rocks to slide," Dimalanta said at a press conference called by Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) yesterday.

Rocks like soil

"These are igneous rocks—hard rocks. But since they are bisected by the fault zone, they're like soil all broken up," she continued.

Second, as a result of weather-

ing, the rocks formed a thick soil cover, she said.

There is also evidence of hydrothermal alterations—made when water runs through a substance—converting some of the rocks to clay minerals.

"Clay minerals are soft. When they get wet, they become more unstable," she added.

Third, La Niña came, softening the soil cover, which had already been

rendered unstable by the fault line and the previous rainfall, she said.

"We recognized the hazards and risks" and the area was later included in the geo-hazard map drafted by several government agencies, she said.

Wrong ingredients

But no one could have foreseen the landslide that buried so many people, erasing an entire barangay

from the map, Dimalanta said.

"Nobody could predict something like this," she said. "All the wrong ingredients were put together, which is why you have this disaster. We recognized the features, but not to the extent that we could say there's going to be a landslide."

For instance, "we were not aware that there was going to be La Niña this year, as well as other parameters," Dimalanta said.

UP geologist cites 3 reasons why village collapsed

From page A1

where the school was entombed. The team, led by mountaineer Ried Esguerra of the Philippine Coast Guard, picked up what the governor believed to be a "sound of life" with the help of sensitive ground sensors.

As Lerial spoke, US Marines 1st Lt. Rex Lacey came asking if he could have more shovels for his comrades because "they think they heard voices down there."

The voices were heard just "by the school," Lacey said.

Survivors unconfirmed

Soon after, Lerial's daughter Marissa said on GMA TV that she had received reports from rescuers that they had heard sounds of knocking.

"There is knocking, there is knocking," Marissa said in near tears. "The numbers I was given were big," referring to rumors swirling around town of survivors having been found.

The report of possible signs of life sparked a wave of rumors.

At one point, GMA News reported that "50 survivors" had been found but there was no official confirmation.

Local Government Undersecretary Marcus Corpus said he had also received information that an unspecified number of people had been "rescued."

But a US military spokesperson said last night that US Marines searching at the site had not found any survivors so far, dismissing reports that they had found 50 survivors.

Capt. Burrelli Palmer said he had spoken to the commander of US forces digging at the site of the buried school.

"They have yet to receive any word on any type of survivors," Palmer said. "I asked for specifics, and I asked had they received or found any type of survivors, and the answer was no."

Instead of survivors, rescue workers pulled out 13 bodies from the mounds of mud yesterday, officials said.

In a 9:30 press briefing last night, Lerial corrected reports about survivors having been actually pulled out from the depths.

"We are still very hopeful that we would be able to rescue survivors and to correct whatever (was reported) in the excitement of hearing some good news, considering people are tired," she said.

The trapped schoolchildren and teachers were among an estimated 1,800 to 2,000 people believed to be in the village when it was blanketed by an avalanche of mud, rocks and boulders last Friday. Most of the villagers were feared dead.

'Praise God'

"First we heard scratches (last Sunday). Now it's rhythmic tapping. It cannot be just a rat making those sounds," a visibly elated Lerial said. "It's enough that we heard a sound of life. Hallelujah! Praise God!"

The bits of encouraging news prompted the governor to send more power generators for light-



JUNGLE WARFARE, or so the humanitarian mission of the US Marines would appear as they go through a hanging bridge on their way to the elementary school that vanished under the earth.

BILLY MARQUEZ

...ng at the dig site so the various rescue teams could work in shifts overnight.

It marked the first time since the tragedy that two separate rescue teams reported hearing movement and gave different descriptions of what they picked up from the muddy depths.

Some 10 to 30 feet of mud was estimated to have covered the village.

Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, overall commander of search and rescue, said his men were elated when equipment detected "signs of life" underneath.

"We were really happy when the readings of the equipment showed that there were signs of life underneath," he told the INQUIRER.

Foreigners focus on school

Among these signs included "knocking and scratching" beneath the piles of mud, he said.

Ramos said rescuers, including foreign experts from the United States, Malaysia, Spain and Taiwan, were focusing their efforts on the school.

Ramos said their operations were hampered by boulders and loose sand.

The pupils and teachers of Guinsaugon Elementary School were celebrating "Women's Day" when tons of mud and rocks tumbled down the mountain and wiped Guinsaugon off the map.

As of 11:30 p.m. yesterday, a total of 85 bodies had been recovered while about 900 people remained missing.

Some 21 survivors remained confined at a district hospital in Aranawon town.

The search for survivors had centered on the school following reports that some of those trapped underneath had sent cell phone text messages to relatives soon after the disaster Friday.

However, no survivors have been pulled out from the 40-hectare mounds that used to be Guinsaugon.

Something down there

"We know there's something down there," US Marine Lt. Richard Neikirk said earlier yesterday, pointing to a spot under a

big boulder, where seismic sensors detected sounds.

"The farther down we went, the signals grew stronger."

A Malaysian team using sound-detection gear picked up noises, too.

"We have a sound," said Sahar Yunus of the Malaysian rescue team. "Knocking, something like that."

A rescue dog also stopped three times at one spot away from where rescue workers were digging.

Meter by meter

At times in heavy rain, rescue workers were digging at two places—one that was believed to be the original site of the school, close to the mountain that collapsed, the other 200 meters down the hill, where the landslide could have carried it.

Dozens of US Marines and Philippine soldiers, along with

timers, were digging in a watery spot, using shovels on the muck and moving it with body bags, while draining the murky fluid with large water bottles.

The search was a painstaking process as the crews went meter by meter.

Sensors detect 'noise'

The US Marines deployed nine seismic sensors that can detect vibrations underground. With everyone standing still, one man then used a steel bar to hit on a rock several times and waited for any kind of response underground.

Four sensors detected some "noise" or vibration, but the men could not tell what it was.

They were followed by the 15-man Malaysian team using sensor gear called Delsar and employing similar techniques.

Five Taiwanese, who brought

heat-imaging equipment, arrived to check for signs of life, too.

Rescuers were radioing for water pumps and floodlights to continue working through the night.

Search dogs waded through the mud as troops and volunteers dug with shovels. No one has been pulled alive from the nine-square-kilometer morass since the first hours of the tragedy.

National disaster officials in Manila said the number of missing was 1,350, including 246 schoolchildren.

There was no immediate explanation for the discrepancy in the numbers given in Manila and by officials here.

Officials in Manila said 434 people survived the disaster.

Hopes of finding more people alive had seemed remote because the village was inundated by a dense wall of mud and rock, making it unlikely that many air pockets would form beneath the sodden surface.

On Sunday at the Vatican, Pope Benedict prayed for the landslide victims.

Pope's prayers

"Our hearts turn to all those suffering the devastating consequences of the landslide in the Philippines. I ask you to join me in praying for the victims, their loved ones and all those affected," the Pope told a large crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square to hear his weekly Angelus blessing.

"May the grieving families experience the consolation of the Lord's presence and rescue workers be assured of our concern and support," he said. "With reports from Christine Q. Avendano, Norman Bordadora and Nikko Diaz

Miriam urges probe

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR-Santiago, in a resolution, urged the Senate to inquire into the causes of deforestation in the province, adding that some experts had attributed the tragedy to illegal logging and the "devastating effects of the kausin system."

Experts have said they believed the landslide was caused by heavy rainfall on a geologically hazardous area.

The Coast Guard called on those who want to donate goods to landslide victims but do not know how to transport them to the province to the agency's Manila headquarters.

The PCG commandant, Vice Adm. Arthur Gosingan, has designated the BRF Romblon as the carrier for donations.

The first to heed the appeal were the students of the Asian Academy of Business and Computers, a newly opened school in Cubao, Quezon City.

The students brought boxes and plastic bags filled with canned goods, clothes and stuffed toys.

Police officials pitched in one day's worth of their salary for the rescue efforts.

Director General Arturo Lomibao led senior officials in donating cash even as he ordered the Region 8 Police to make available its resources and people to the rescue mission. With reports from Luge del Puerto, Philip C. Tubera and Leila B. Salaverria

GMA sends off Spanish rescue team, dogs to Leyte

From page A1

seeing them off yesterday.

Accompanying the dogs—and also the subject of the President's warm sendoff—were three Spanish rescuers and a doctor, as well as three rescue teams from the Philippine Air Force presidential wing.

They will beef up efforts to find survivors in the avalanche-ravaged Barangay Guinsaugon in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte.

"Thank you for sending us the K-9 dogs and experts. Spain is the latest of so many countries to help," Ms Arroyo said at the PAF operations base at the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

More to come

With Spanish Ambassador Ignacio Sagaz and Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes, the PAF commanding general, flanking her, Ms Arroyo enumerated the countries that had sent or pledged assistance—Malaysia, the United States, Singapore, the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

"We'd like to thank everybody for the outpouring of support," she said.

MORE INT'L AID COMING US to divert 3,000 GIs to Leyte

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan,
Jhunex Napallagan
PDI Visayas Bureau
and Nikko Dixon

AS MANY AS 3,000 AMERICAN troops, or more than half of the United States contingent in joint Balikatan military exercises in Sulu, would be diverted to St. Bernard, Leyte to help in landslide search and rescue operations.

The rest of the 5,500-person US contingent would continue with anti-terrorism exercises and civic missions in Sulu, Cebu and parts of Luzon where the exercises would be held, Brig. Gen. Martin Robeson, exercise director for the US military said during the opening ceremonies in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

"We diverted at least 2,500 to 3,000 of our airmen, sailors and soldiers to Southern Leyte to assist in search and rescue operations," Robeson told reporters.

He said their troops would be working with the Armed Forces of the Philippines Central Command under Lt. Gen. Samuel Bagasian in the search and rescue operations.

Thousands of Philippine soldiers are at the disaster site since a massive landslide hit the barangay Friday morning, burying about 2,000 residents including about 240 school children.

US officials said the scheduled Balikatan exercises in Sulu and elsewhere in the country would go on.

"Nothing is going to be taken away from that operation by deploying some of our assets to the operation in [Southern] Leyte. We can do both together," US Charge d'affaires Paul Jones said.

Win-win situation

"We can do it simultaneously. I think it's a win-win situation. We're still working together shoulder to shoulder. We're not skipping a beat," said Robeson.

He said 200 US Marines were at the disaster site as of yesterday morning. He added they could deploy as many as 500 at the disaster site.

The rest of the diverted troops would man three battle ships that would be used to ferry relief supplies, he said.

At the ceremonial opening of the 2006 Balikatan, the 22nd large-scale joint war exercises between the Philippines and the United States, officials from both sides said the exercises have in recent years included medical and engineering missions by US troops.

AFP chief of staff, Gen. Genaro Senga, said civic missions which partly address poverty "are

part of the war on terrorism."

"I'm happy to note that focus of the Balikatan has shifted to the tragedy we are facing now in Southern Leyte," he said.

Rescue operations have been focused on an elementary school building where some 206 children and 40 teachers were believed to have been entombed, and a village hall, where a meeting was being held when the landslide hit (See story on Page A1.)

US Marines diverted

US Marines from amphibious ships USS Essex and USS Harpers Ferry had just docked Friday at Subic Bay when they received urgent orders to turn around and head for Southern Leyte.

"Our main activity has been searching for survivors on the site," said Col. James Vohr, commander of a US Marine expeditionary unit service support group that arrived in St. Bernard on Sunday.

"We're going to supply support to both the site and the evacuation centers," Vohr said.

One platoon with shovels and body bags trekked yesterday toward the presumed site of the village school, which had become the focus of the search.

The rest of the 225-member US Marine team was setting up a water purification system on the site, Vohr said.

Fifteen giant helicopters from the Essex flew to the site with supplies from Tacloban City to the north.

Change of mood

In Cebu City, 60 American and Filipino military officers have shifted their joint Balikatan exercises into directing the search and rescue operations in St. Bernard.

Lt. Col. Jefferson Omandan, Armed Forces Central Command spokesperson who participated in the activity, said the five-day exercises started yesterday at the Cebu City Marriott Hotel.

But instead of Combined Task Force Staff Exercises, he added, the group focused on planning the search operation for about 900 residents of Barangay Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, who were buried under mud and rocks.

"We have already shifted and changed our mode of activity. We are now turning into a command post exercise and acting as a combined task force to address the Leyte tragedy," Omandan said yesterday.

Experts from Taiwan

Aside from the US troops, oth-



IRAQ WAS NEVER LIKE THIS: US Marine LCpl Ray Hayes attached to the 31st MEU from Okinawa helps pull fellow Marines up a mud-caked boulder during rescue and reconstruction efforts in Guinsaugon.

er countries are taking part in the search and rescue operation.

Among them is a 30-strong Taiwanese specialist team who waded through mud and debris to try to locate the school where some 200 pupils and 40 teachers were buried under tons of mud and rock.

Joseph Chang, a foreign ministry official coordinating the Taiwanese effort, said yesterday they were trying to locate the school.

"Local rescue teams have managed to pinpoint where the school once stood but they may be focusing on the wrong area," Chang said. "In a landslide, the crush of mud and boulders would have pushed the building away. Rescuers had looked at maps to find where the building once stood but it may no longer be on that spot."

His team has sonar and video equipment and will comb an area below where the school once probably stood.

"We will try to do our best to look for bodies and possible survivors. We have had a lot of experience in this sort of thing," Chang said.

Some 70 Malaysian medics were also at Barangay Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, who were buried under mud and rocks.

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Help from China, Japan

The People's Republic of China yesterday turned over to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) a \$250,000 (P12.9 million) check as part of its \$1-million

(P51.9 million) donation for the landslide victims in Southern Leyte.

Duque told reporters that several other countries made "pledges and commitments" of financial help but they are still waiting for the Philippine government to furnish them a "needs list from the affected areas."

"They want to know the actual needs of the affected areas and the NDCC has an assessment team to determine these actual needs," Duque said in an interview at the DFA.

Aside from the \$250,000 check, the Chinese government also pledged \$750,000 (P38.9 million) worth of material goods for the landslide victims.

The Japanese Embassy said on Sunday that its government would provide relief items amounting to Y25 million (P10.9 million) for the landslide victims.

The relief items include tents, sleeping mattresses, blankets, generators, cable codes, water tank, water purification units, plastic containers and plastic rolls.

Australia, S. Korea, Canada

Australia would send a small team of engineers to the Philippines to assist with damage assessment and reconstruction efforts following a massive mud slide, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said yesterday.

Canberra pledged to send a five-member engineering team and A\$1 million dollars (P38.4 million) in aid.

Help from China, Japan

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Hi-tech 'life detectors' St. Bernard's best hope

By Volk Contreras

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—Aside from prayers and sheer will power, high-tech gadgets capable of hearing heartbeats from someone trapped deep in the ground may be this town's best hope of finding survivors in a village swamped by a landslide.

Pegged into ground

It was through a Delsar system that a Philippine rescue team on Sunday heard "scratching" sounds from beneath the spot assumed to be where an elementary school holding more than 200 pupils and teachers was buried.

The Delsar is mainly made up of a long cord fixed with sensors every 10 meters. The sensors are then "pegged" into the ground. Earphone attachments allow at least two persons to listen in at the same time.

The six-sensor unit brought by the Malaysians can cover ground with a radius of 50 meters, said Mohammad Yusof of the Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance Team (Smart).

Beehive of activity

As of yesterday, the rescue staging area some 2 km from the disaster site was a frenzy of multinational activity.

American troops diverted from the RP-US Balikatan exercises numbered 148, pitching several tents and brandishing the most modern communications gadgets, vehicles and other equipment.

A six-man K9 team from Spain also arrived, with two search dogs.

On the Filipino side, there were 598 rescuers from the military and police and 455 from civilian volunteer groups.

The total number of rescuer workers stood on Sunday at 1,271—for exceeding the 928 villagers officially reported as missing.

What the eye can't see

The video detector is made up of a rod or probe about three meters long, which is fitted with a video screen at one end and an adjustable lens at the other.

The tip with the lens is inserted through holes or narrow openings "to look into where the eye cannot reach" and the

South Korea would send \$1 million (P51.9 million) in cash and relief supplies, including food, medicine and blankets, its Foreign Ministry said in a statement yesterday.

Canada said it was preparing to send help while the Greek government offered more than \$350,000 (P18.1 million) in aid.

New Zealand, Singapore

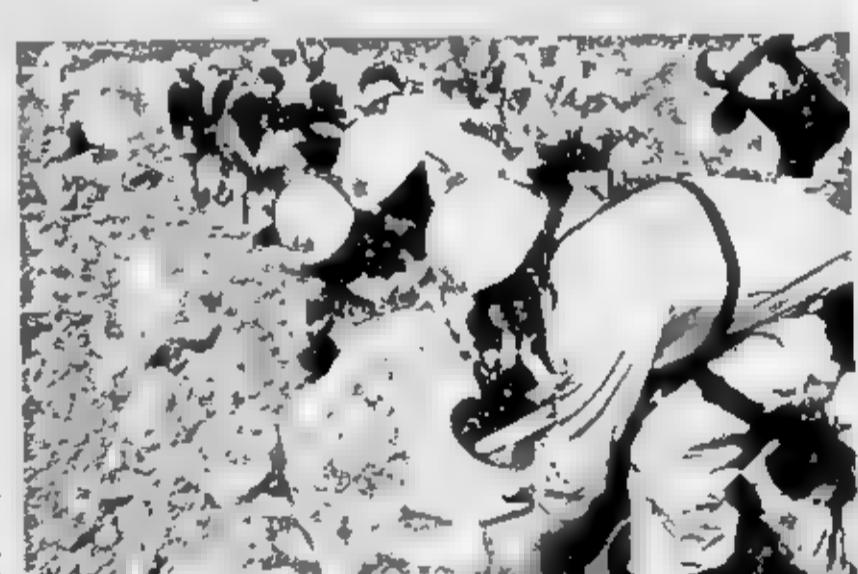
New Zealand said yesterday it would provide NZ\$200,000 dol-

lars (P6.9 million) to help with rescue and recovery efforts in Southern Leyte.

Singapore said yesterday it was sending humanitarian relief supplies for survivors of last week's massive landslide in the southern Philippines.

The Singapore Red Cross would also donate \$5100,000 (P3.1 million) to the Philippine National Red Cross for the relief effort, it said.

With reports from AFP and AP



Las Vegas car salesman wages desperate search for missing kin

GUINSAUGON, SOUTHERN Leyte—His chubby frame half buried in the thick mud, Las Vegas car salesman Norman Barrister is waging a desperate personal search for 10 members of his family buried alive by a landslide.

After sneaking past Army rescue personnel before dawn yesterday, the 35-year-old Filipino-American navigated by memory through a sea of mud and rocks that cascaded down the slopes of Mount Kan-abag last Friday and buried his childhood home in Guinsaugon village.

This is the same mountain slope that once provided his family members with their livelihood—his grandfather tended a coffee plantation there.

Now, it's just a heap of mud.

Barrister, born in Guinsaugon, left the village in 1991 for the United States with his American father and Filipino mother. They left behind his half-brother and members of the extended family hoping they

could one day join them in America.

Tears streamed down his mud-caked face as he alternately used his hands and a shovel to dig. Barrister said he still hopes his relatives are alive three days after the tragedy.

Text from brother

Barrister jumped on the first flight from Las Vegas shortly after hearing of the tragedy. He arrived Sunday.

"My beloved grandfather, mother, my brother, aunt, cousins and their children are in there. We cannot lose hope," he told a passing rescue team, begging them for assistance.

Barrister said he knows his brother was still alive some seven hours after the tragedy Friday because of a mobile-phone message

he sent to his girlfriend.

"That was the last we heard from my brother," he said, adding that surviving relatives told him the entire family was having snacks when the tragedy happened.

One dog, please

"My aunt is a member of a local women's charitable institution and there was some sort of gathering here," he said, pointing to a huge boulder where he believes the family compound once stood.

"I am sure some of the houses are here, I just need one dog please," he appealed to a passing canine rescue team headed in the opposite direction. "That area there is a valley, there are no houses there, believe me please."

As a teenager in Guinsaugon, Barrister played with his friends on the mountain buried for its sweet spring water.

Whenever it rained, deep gullies would form at the top of the mountain creating small waterfalls and landslides, he recalled.

Not the mountain he knew

"But that was a normal thing. I never thought that one day this mountain would swallow my relatives," he said, directing the rescuers to an area where he believes the primary school is located.

More than 200 children and 40 teachers were inside at the time.

Rain began falling again after day, loosening the soil and creating small streams of water. Rescuers sank to their knees occasionally, struggling under loads of supplies.

"The area is constantly shifting and every day the landscape changes," said one of the Red Cross team leaders, Hector Reyes.

He urged Barrister to calm down, telling him help is already at the site. But the rescue effort is painfully slow.

"The area is just buried so deep in the mud, it's very difficult to navigate and to put markers once you identify a structure," Reyes said.

APP

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APP

Taipans pledge new school

By Volk Contreras

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—All rescuers pressed their search for life in an elementary school entombed by a landslide, a group of wealthy Chinese-Pilipino businessmen pledged to build a new campus for survivors.

Personal delivery of aid

Officials of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, including tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan, flew in to personally deliver aid for residents of Barangay Guinsaugon.

"We just have to be prepared for the next calamity," said Tan, FCCCI chair emeritus and a media-shy taipan.

FCCCI president Francis

Chua said the group would be donating five school buildings worth P2 million.

5-building campus

THE PALACE

From page A1

them and found the President seated at his desk, with an aide holding a white bulletproof vest. Bongbong, his son, who was wearing a camouflage uniform, ordered the other security officers to uncock their firearms. They hurriedly left the study to locate the area where the bomb had fallen.

"I was alone with the President briefly. His aide was ordered to gather the rest of the family and lead them down the staircase to the ground floor.

Like a statue

"The President was too calm for comfort. In fact, he looked like a statue, immobile in the midst of the confusion around him. I sat on one of the chairs that was positioned directly in front of him, and we stared at each other.

"Finally, I said, my voice as hysterical as the beating of my heart: 'Mr. President, the Palace has just been bombed! Are you not going to defend yourself? This is the seat of power, and an attack has been launched against it. Will you fight back?'

"I was near panic, and it showed in the manner I spoke to him.

"Very calmly, he answered me: 'Rita, it is easy for you to say I should fight back. I know how you feel. If your neighbor is yellow [the campaign color of the political opposition against Marcos], you can simply walk the other side of the street and ignore him, or build a wall so you won't see him at all. But, those people in [Camps] Crame and Aguinaldo, even if they are fighting me, are still my people. I am President even of those who have become yellow.'

"His reply was unbelievable.

"But for the moment, I kept my silence and thought to myself how often I had seen this man in moments of crisis, and how confidently he had handled them in the past. Always, there was something up his sleeve, a reserved ace, something at the back of his mind that we knew nothing of, and he would spring this surprise to avert the crisis.

"Perhaps now, especially now, there was something else behind him, something I knew nothing of. And hopefully, at the right time, he shall bring this out to straighten things.

"We waited in uncomfortable silence.

Made in the USA

"Bongbong returned with some metal fragments, and, along with the military officers gathered in the room with his father, identified the bomb as neither issued nor used by the Philippine military. It was marked 'Made in the United States of America.'

"From the President's study, we descend-

WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG, the Marcoses were younger and lovelier royals at the Palace.



ed to the ground floor rooms used for storing the glasses and chinaware for state functions. The cabinets were covered with white sheets; a desk was set in the center, with a small sofa directly facing it.

"The President asked for a phone to be installed. Imelda busied herself with her grandchildren and the rest of the family. She moved about quite nervously, carrying large cushions from the wrought-iron garden chairs and lining them on the floor.

"Some officers were on another phone, repeating the directional course of another helicopter that was approaching the Palace. 'Were we expecting more bombs to fall?'

"More soldiers came in and passed blue ribbons to the other military men in the Palace. They tied the ribbons to the barrel ends of their rifles—a counter-sign, they said, against hostile forces that were wearing the same uniforms.

"I was given a ribbon in the rush of distribution. I tied it to my ponytail, and while doing so, suddenly wondered what I would possibly look like in case my body was split into fragments by a bomb.

"How would they identify my body parts?

ID cards

"I took my wallet from the hip pocket of my jeans and brought out all the identification cards I had. My media card, driver's license, Malacañang gate pass, San Beda College of Law student ID, and calling card. I put one in each of the pockets of my shirt and jeans.

"It was insane!

"The Palace butlers were distributing McDonald's hamburgers in white plastic containers. I was not hungry.

"There was a phone in the kitchen, and I called my home. As calmly as I could, I told

my children that the Palace had just been bombed and that we were taking shelter on the ground floor because there could be more attacks. I told them that I was staying close to the First Family, and that they should not worry about me because I did not intend to die. And that should we escape from here to wherever, I shall contact them immediately.

"And that they, too, must secure themselves if they do not hear from me in the next few hours.

"They asked about the President. I said he was fine, and so was everyone else. I also asked them to pray and not to stop praying until they hear from me again.

"Imelda kept on asking for me. She sent her aide to fetch me from the kitchen phone. But when I approached her, she had nothing to say.

"We walked back and forth in silence, and then she returned to the next room where her grandchildren were huddled together.

Stoic and immobile

"I found myself once again alone with the President. He was seated in front of the desk, bare except for the telephone and a small brown paper bag.

"I sat on the small sofa across from his desk and put my feet up in a lotus position. My knees were shaking, and that was the only way I could keep my whole body from shaking, too.

"I searched his face for any sign of strain or anxiety, and there was absolutely nothing I could read. He was stoic, almost immobile, exactly as he looked upstairs in his study when the bomb dropped.

"I could hear the President's aide in the distance, coordinating with someone

on the phone. Another officer was seated on the floor close to the wall facing an open patio, looking at the sky. He was making motions indicating that another aircraft was approaching.

"I looked back at the President. He has not moved or said a word.

"Suddenly, it dawned on me. Marcos was hurting; a part of him had been severed and he was bleeding.

"He could not shoot at Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Armed Forces Vice Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos because they were that part of him that was tearing away from his body. He could not hurt them without hurting himself; he could not kill them without killing a part of himself.

"My hair was on edge and my whole being seemed immersed in that moment.

"He sat there in front of me in complete agony. His face was almost translucent, almost radiant with extreme suffering. He was paralyzed beyond belief, transfigured in pure pain, and it poured out of him in an aura so strong I could almost touch it.

"And there was nothing up his sleeve, no ace reserved, no hidden plan, no strategy kept for use in a moment as stupifying as this.

Advance team

"Nothing was behind him now. Only the Pasig River flowed behind the Palace, black with dirt and heady with stench. If he crossed that river, I said to myself, that would be his end."

"When Enrile and Ramos began their encampment on EDSA, rebel soldiers who had penetrated the Presidential Security

Command at the other side of the river were being captured and arrested on the Palace grounds.

"They had pretended to be part of the additional security for the inaugural rites. But since no such orders had been given for the specific composition of the unit, it was found out that the soldiers were the advance team of the rebel assault on the Palace.

"They came from the 2nd Infantry Division based in Tanay, Rizal, less than 10 kilometers from the Palace.

"Three battalions were expected, but two battalion commanders had backed out.

"The rebels were escorted and guided by Capt. Ricardo 'Dick' Morales, a senior security officer of Imelda's who was, in fact, being groomed to be an alternate aide de camp.

"They were arrested and presented on TV to the public, with Marcos saying, among other things:

"Instead of wiping out this corner of Camp Aguinaldo with hostile fire—because it can be easily wiped out with simple artillery fire without any of our personnel being involved in the fighting—I would prefer to talk about how they shall be treated if they surrender."

"I call upon the minister of national defense and the vice chief of staff to stop this stupidity and surrender so that we may negotiate exactly what should be done with them and their men."

"I have nothing but sadness for those who participated in this conspiracy... We did not know they could reach this height of treason and rebellion."

"I hope that this sadness of mine will impress them with the fact that we have no intention to hurt them."

On the air

"It was bizarre how Marcos' words and tone of voice were lacking anger or panic."

"Enrile had asked Eugenio D. Apostol to call Jaime Cardinal Sin and US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth."

"The cardinal went on the air calling for people to support the rebels. Agapito 'Butz' Aquino and several militant groups also called on the people to assemble at EDSA."

"Enrile also went on the air, appealing for 'people protection,' saying the rebels were 'going to be bombarded by the forces loyal to Marcos.'

"The 'bombardment' never happened. Not a single shot was fired at the rebel strongholds in Camps Crame and Aguinaldo during any of the days that the rebels and the people at EDSA held their ground."

The crowd at EDSA was allowed to thicken well into the following day, a Sunday.

(To be concluded)

THE MILITARY

From page A1

planted there. He made the Palace safe for the new President, Mrs. Corazon Aquino.

He was looking forward to some form of recognition from the new government. That it never came was a heartache that he bore until his last days.

Let me start my EDSA story by defining our family's alliances before that event.

Half-breed loyalists'

The Manalo family may be classified as "half-breed" Loyalist in relation to what transpired at EDSA. My father, known as Bobby to his friends and fellow officers, was known to be a very close friend and confidant of Gen. Fabian Ver, the Armed Forces chief of staff. Ver was the main sponsor at the silver wedding anniversary of my parents in January 1983. It was Ver who promoted my father to chief ordnance of the Camp Aguinaldo headquarters and for a time as concurrent chief of the AFP's Research & Development Center.

Chief ordnance

As chief ordnance, my father was responsible for the quality control, procurement, monitoring and approval for release of all military weapons, ammunition and supplies.

My mother, Osta "Ole" Cerdona-Manalo, who died in May 1985, was a businesswoman who ran a restaurant and catering service in Camp Crame. At the time, my mother's company was the official caterer of Camp Crame and unofficial caterer of Camp Aguinaldo. She was a three-term president of the Philippine Constabulary Officers Women's Club, the association of PC officers' wives. She was also adviser to the GHQ Officers Women's Club, the organization headed by Mrs. Ada Ver.

My mother was a very close friend and confidant of Ms. Amelita "Ming" Ramos, the wife of Vice Chief of Staff Fidel V. Ramos. Ming Ramos also stood as a main sponsor to my parents at their silver wedding anniversary.

"This is why I call our family 'half-breed' Loyalist. Sometimes I think that

Why the cannons did not fire at EDSA



CONFIDENT TO GEN. FABIAN VER (right), Col. Carlos B. Manalo, chief ordnance and bomb disposal expert, never signed the document that would release ammo for the howitzer cannons.

this must be the reason why my father was never promoted to brigadier general.

Despite these odd alliances, I am very proud of my parents because they did an excellent balancing act to maintain neutrality and strong relationships between two factions during that "either-you're-with-us-or-against-us" situation.

Day 1, Feb. 22, 1986

Feb. 22 was a day of grief for us and our relatives. It was the day we buried my brother David who died on Feb. 19. It was the third death in our family since September 1984.

While at the funeral, we heard the news about the press conference at Camp Aguinaldo of the Enrile-Ramos breakaway group. We all rushed home to watch it. My father, just like an officer in command of his company, gave orders to everyone.

"Napoleon, Alexander (my other brother) tell the drivers to bring their families to our house. Take one car and buy food, medicine and whatever else may be needed."

"There were around 15 to 20 people in our house. I asked myself, is this for real?

ed for the next two weeks. This is not a joking matter, this could mean war."

My father's three drivers cum bodyguards who were PC enlisted men left immediately to fetch their families. My brother and I went "panic-buying" for supplies.

As soon as we returned to our house in Kamias, Quezon City, my father called for a family meeting that included the household help, the drivers and their families. I can still recall the worried tone in his voice which he tried his best to hide by speaking with authority.

He said: "What is happening now could last for some time. I am known in Kamias to be a protégé of Ver. I won't be surprised if some of our neighbors will try to spy on us. So it would be best if we watched their movements. Don't let in anyone we don't know. [The drivers/bodyguards will] take turns in guarding the house, and let the dogs out."

"There were around 15 to 20 people in our house. I asked myself, is this for real?

It gave us all a feeling of uncertainty and fear. Suddenly, the phone rang. It was from the office of General Ver. After speaking with Ver for about 20 minutes, my father told me that an enlisted man would be coming early the next day to have him sign the release order for ammunition for the howitzer cannons.

I asked my father, "Daddy, are you going to sign? What is going to happen?"

He said: "I have to, otherwise I will be charged with insubordination. And worse, a traitor; I really don't know what the situation is. Fabian said the situation will be under control by tomorrow evening. They will bomb Camp Aguinaldo if Ver and Ramos do not surrender by tomorrow afternoon. If that happens, many people will die."

Day 2, Feb. 23, 1986

At a little past 3 in the morning, my sister Jojo woke me up to tell me that my father was having a hypertensive attack. I jumped out of bed and called Colonel Marasigan, the Surgeon General of the V. Luna Military Hospital who lives five houses away from us. Unfortunately, he was not around.

My sister placed an ice bag on my father's head and nape and gave him his maintenance medicine for his hypertension.

After a few minutes, he fell asleep.

At 8 a.m., a military jeep arrived at our gate. It was the enlisted man that Ver had sent with the release order for the ammunition. I told him to wait at the gate.

I went to my father's room. He was asleep. I informed the enlisted man that my father was still asleep and needed to rest because he had a hypertensive attack early that morning. I suggested that he return in the afternoon.

He returned at about 1:30 p.m. I told him to wait while I checked with my father.

Never called Ver

My father said: "Tell him I'm still feeling dizzy. I can't get up because my blood pressure is high. Tell him to come back."

I asked him what time the soldier should return.

My father answered: "I will just call

General Ver." (He never called Ver.)

After dinner, the phone rang. It was Maj. Wylio Ver, the third son of General Ver who had just been promoted as commanding officer of the Presidential Security Command Light Armored Battalion. They spoke for more than an hour.

After their talk, my father told me: "It looks like there will be fighting tomorrow because the crowd at EDSA is getting bigger. Fabian is insisting that I sign the release order for the ammunition for the howitzers. I am told that General Ver has said that after this is over, I will be promoted to brigadier general."

I asked what else they had talked about.

"Wylio said that if the people attack Malacañang and the Presidential Security Command camp, they are ready for them. The people will not be able to get in because they have prepared tanks and booby traps. He also told me where these booby traps are."

"But you know, son, after this is over, I want to retire. Fabian has extended my service for three years. That should be enough. I don't want to stay on. I cannot accept that because of my signature, many people will die. Tomorrow when the sergeant returns, wake me up."

As he walked toward his bedroom, he turned to me and said, "Thank you for dealing with the sergeant."

(To be continued)

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Big gamble paid off for Bulls

By June Navarro

RED BULL MADE A CRUCIAL gamble and placed all its bets on the table hoping this one would turn out right. It paid off.

James Penny proved to be the missing piece in Red Bull's championship puzzle after the Bulls clinched the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference crown over Purefoods Sunday night.

"It was a big gamble because [former Red Bull import] Quemont Greer is a great player," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, who captured his third coaching title with the Bulls, and fifth overall.

"But James has great talent, one who makes the others look good. The pieces just fell into place."

The Bulls proved too cunning for the Giants and grabbed the crown in six games, 4-2.

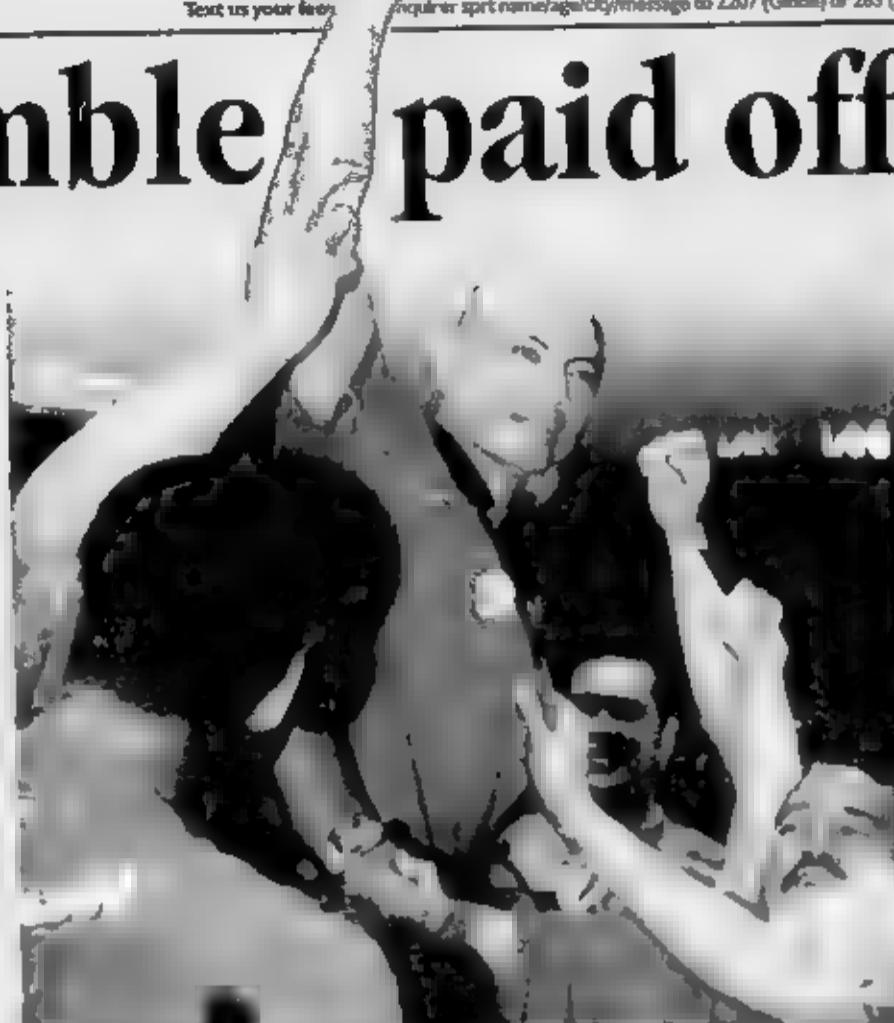
Penny replaced Greer after the elimination round following the Bulls' defeat to Barangay Ginebra for the right to advance into the semifinals outright.

After winning the 2001 and 2002 Commisioner's Cup, the road to another championship stink proved bumpy for the Bulls. They bowed to the Gin Kings in the Fiesta Conference Finals last year.

And then troubles came aplenty. Vonn Harp and Mick Pennisi got entangled in a citizenship mess while Jimwell Torion was suspended on drug charges.

"We were a championship team before the slide, but the management was committed to rebuilding the team," said Guiao, whose five titles were all import-spiced.

"I'm proud of what we have achieved in such a short time," said Red Bull team manager Tony Chua, who masterminded the



YENG GUIAO: I somehow knew that the bench was going to be crucial.

AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

Bulls' key acquisitions in recent years that netted them Enrico Vilanueva, Topex Robinson, Cyrus Baguio and rookie Larry Fonacier.

Junthy Valenzuela, Lordy Tugade, Pennisi and Torion are the only remnants of the original Red Bull squad that entered the league in 2000.

"We wanted depth and balance in building up this team," said Guiao. "We just developed

and bred players using our own system."

Statistically, bench scoring was crucial in the series. In all six games, the team which utilized its bench better eventually won.

"I don't know if it's prediction or foresight that enabled us to win this," said Guiao. "But I somehow knew the bench was going to be crucial in this series."

"On any given night, there are guys who can step up. This [sixth] game was proof."

Telan switches teams with Ferriols

MARK TELAN FOUND HIMSELF under the wings of the Air21 Express after a trade with Talk 'N Text for John Ferriols was consummated over the weekend.

"He's (Telan) a perfect fit for us," said Air21 coach Bo Perasol, whose priority is to beef up the Express frontline for the PBA All-Filipino Conference starting next month.

Telan showed up at Air21's practice venue in Alabang yesterday morning and Perasol was satisfied

with what he saw.

"We will now have more flexibility inside the paint because I can combine Mark, Vancy (De Ocampo) and Ramidel (De Ocampo) and still get good results," said Perasol.

The trade was completed late Sunday afternoon. A reliable source said Telan's acquisition was just one of the initial moves Air21 had made to snag a dominant bigman.

One of six players elevated to the pro ranks by the defunct Tanduay in

1999, the 6-foot-6 Telan is on his seventh season and has career averages of 8.1 points and 4.9 rebounds per game. He has played 314 games with three teams.

Ferriols, who honed his skills while seeing action for the Negros in the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association, was drafted 12th overall by the Express in 2003.

The 6-foot-4 Davaoño compiled a career average of 8.6 ppg, 6.0 rpg and 1.0 assist per game in 133

games. Ferriols made 5.2 points per game and 3.8 rebounds in 32 games for the Express.

"It's a win-win situation," said Perasol. "Talk 'N Text could use John (Ferriols) to ease the pressure on Asi (Taulava)."

Meanwhile, Vergel Meneses has been trying his luck with the Phone Pals. Waived by the Bulls before the season, Meneses has joined Talk 'N Text's team-building session in Subic.

June Navarro

Peping, Robert said to be at loggerheads

POC exec board to tackle 'feud'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE TWO HIGHEST OFFICIALS of the Philippine Olympic Committee are said to be quarreling, and the local Olympic body is doing all it can to help nip the leaders' disagreements in the bud.

Yesterday, the POC executive board called for a meeting tomorrow to discuss, among other things, the reported feud between president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and chair Robert Aventajado.

POC spokesman Joey Romasanta didn't deny that differences have soured the partnership between Cojuangco and Aventajado, but refused to reveal details. He merely said that Aventajado has "personal matters" to attend to in the United States and that his POC duties will have to take the back seat.

"That (feud) will be discussed in the meeting," said Romasanta.

The reported rift between the once-staunch allies came as a shock to the POC family.

Cojuangco and Aventajado jointly weathered storms that buffeted the Olympic body from the time they were elected to the two top posts in late 2004—when Aventajado switched sides from former president Celso Dayan to Cojuangco—to the country's cramming to host last year's 23rd Southeast Asian Games.



COJUANGCO



AVENTAJADO

Sources said the rift began right after the SEA Games. Aventajado, chief of the broadcast group of the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee, reportedly failed to reach the committee's target in broadcast revenues.

Other sources said the two are also quarreling over the protracted controversy involving the Basketball Association of the Philippines, which had been expelled by the POC but is still recognized by the International Basketball Federation, Fiba.

Aventajado was appointed committee chief of the task force dealing with the contentious basketball issues.

Aventajado, who heads the national taekwondo body,

also reportedly has run-ins with certain national sports association heads close to Cojuangco over his growing role in the POC decision making.

"It is not actually between Cojuangco and Aventajado," said an NSA chief. "It's between Aventajado and several NSA heads close to Cojuangco."

Romasanta hinted that developments will be announced during the board meeting set at noon tomorrow at the Milly Way restaurant along Pasay Road in Makati City.

The POC, according to Romasanta, is also expected to discuss the country's preparation for the Doha Asian Games.

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PAL INTERCLUB

Real work begins for crack Canlubang

By Ernesto A. Gonzales

DAVAO—THE SENIORS CROWN PROVED easy picking. Now the real work begins for Canlubang.

Still smarting from their freakish loss to Manila Southwoods in Bacolod last year, Canlubang vows to redeem itself in the men's Regular tournament beginning tomorrow in hopes of completing its first title double in the 56th Philippine Airlines Interclub golf championships.

"Now we go for a championship double," said Luigi Yulo after Canlubang wrapped up its first Seniors title Sunday in what turned out to be an anti-climatic finish following the disqualification of Luisita for fielding an ineligible player.

Luisita is the only team to score a sweep of the two titles since the Senior event for players 55 years and above was included in the PAL tournament in 1988.

The Tarlac-based squad pulled off three championship doubles, the last in 1998. Since then, no team has moved into position to clinch the two crowns at stake, until this year when Canlubang ended Luisita's bid for a record sixth straight Seniors title and 13th overall.

With a leading collection of 12 Regular championships, Canlubang remains a solid title threat, more so with its prospective lineup now boasting upcoming stars who learned the game as caddies at the Apo course, which will co-host the event with Rancho Palos Verdes.

Aside from former national team members Jay Bayron and Boyet Saragoza, Canlubang now boasts reigning national caddies champion Mario Labajo, Junel Abeba, Joseph Labajo and Mario Jernando.



JAY Bayron

BOYET Saragoza

MARIO Labajo

Canlubang lost the championship by four points last year as two disputed rulings, one of which cost then top amateur Jovic Pagunsan two points, proved decisive for Manila Southwoods.

Jeric Hechanova, who masterfully shuffled the Southwoods' stars to produce the close win last year, is now with John Hay, but the team has summoned an old hand, Thirly Escano, to skipper this year's campaign.

Southwoods also lost a stalwart in Arminio Muñoz, now a pro like Pagunsan, but the team has kept its young nucleus and added two able Japanese, Thru Nakajima and Michio Masumura.

Making it a three-way shoot-out for the third straight year is 2004 champion Del Monte, which retained most of the key players of its breakthrough year and added Iggy Claverilla, Martin Misa and Julian Minico, brother of the famous Frankie.

The lineups will be finalized today during a

team captains' meeting. Skippers are expected to make sure that all players declared for their 10-man lineups are in the original list submitted during the first team captains' gathering last October.

Luisita was sacked last Sunday because of this rule after it fielded Seve Rosas Chua, who was not on the original roster.

This year's edition has Action Asia, Airbus, Boeing, GE Aviation, GMA 7, Honda Cars Davao, INQ7.net, Joey 92.3, Royal Caribbean International, Philippine Gamung and Amusements Corp., People Asia, Premier Wine and Spirits, Rudy Project, UMBN, and Uraya Land Development Corp. as major sponsors.

ABS-CBN International, Fortune Tobacco and Radio Mindanao Network are the corporate sponsors while 96.3 Wrock, Asia Brewery, Century Park Hotel, Honda Megamotors, SM City Davao and Tanduay Rum are the minor sponsors.



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City Philippines
Tel. Nos. 636-65-43, Telefax No. 636-65-42, 633-93-43
Website: <http://www/DepED.gov.ph>



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education Central Office through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for

| PACKAGE NO. | DIVISION | SCHOOL | PROJECT | Approved Budget for the Contract |
|-------------|------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Rizal | Rosario Ocampo Elementary School San Jose Elementary School | Construction of Two (2) Storey Eight (8) Classroom School Building Construction of Two (2) Storey Six (6) Classroom School Building | 10,458,180.00 |
| 2 | Rizal | Upat-Upat Elementary School Mambog Elementary School | Construction of Two (2) Storey Eight (8) Classroom School Building Construction of Two (2) Storey Eight (8) Classroom School Building | 11,514,000.00 |
| 3 | Rizal | Tanay National High School Gen. Lucio Geronimo Hall High School | Construction of Two (2) Storey Eight (8) Classroom School Building Construction of Three (3) Storey Six (6) Classroom School Building | 10,079,718.85 |
| 4 | Antipolo City | Saint Peter Elementary School Immaculate Elementary School | Construction of Two (2) Storey Six (6) Classroom School Building Construction of Two (2) Storey Six (6) Classroom School Building | 8,885,000.00 |
| 5 | Quezon City | Plaza del Mundo Elementary School San Gabriel Elementary School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | 13,901,790.00 |
| 6 | Quezon City | Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School Ismael Mathey Sr. High School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | 12,545,000.00 |
| 7 | Quezon City | Novacel High School San Francisco High School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | 12,545,164.05 |
| 8 | Quezon City | Carlos Albert High School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | 6,755,000.00 |
| 9 | Catanduanes City | Gabinetes Saeng Elementary School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Fifteen (15) Classroom School Building | |
| 10 | Catanduanes City | Deparo Elementary School Camann Elementary School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building Phase II Completion of Three (3) Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | |
| 11 | Manila City | San Pedro Elementary School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Fifteen (15) Classroom School Building | 6,948,000.00 |
| 12 | Paranaque City | Paranaque Elementary School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | 6,755,000.00 |
| 13 | Las Piñas City | Pampanga Central Elementary School | Partial Construction of Three Storey Fifteen (15) Classroom School Building | 10,900,900.00 |
| 14 | Makati City | Tinagong National High School Patricio High School | Partial Construction of Three (3) Storey Fifteen (15) Classroom School Building Partial Construction of Three (3) Storey Nine (9) Classroom School Building | 10,052,087.85 |
| 15 | Muntinlupa City | Muntinlupa Elementary School | Phase II Completion of construction of 3 Storey School Building | 8,385,977.65 |

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations.

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows.

| Activities | Schedule | Location |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Receipt from Prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and issuance of Eligibility Form | February 13, 2006 - February 20, 2006 | |
| Receipt of Eligibility Requirements | February 14, 2006 - February 24, 2006 | BAC Secretariat, 5th Flr., Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City |
| Eligibility Screening | February 27, 2006 - March 2, 2006 | |
| Notice of Results of Eligibility Check | March 6, 2006 | |
| Issuance of Bidding Documents | March 8 to April 5, 2006 | |
| Pre-Bid Conference | March 20, 2006, 10:00 A.M. | |
| Receipt and Opening of Bids (Package 1 to 4) | April 6, 2006, 10:00 A.M. | Sulwagan ng Kanlungan, DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City |
| Receipt and Opening of Bids (Package 5 to 15) | April 6, 2006, 10:00 A.M. | |

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders the Eligibility Forms at BAC Secretariat Office, 5th Floor Mabini Building, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI). Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC Secretariat at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue electronic copy (CD) of Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PHP 3,500.00 per package to the DepED Cashier Plans and Bill of Quantities Forms will be issued in hard copies.

Bids in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract per Package shall be rejected. Likewise, late bids shall be rejected.

The Department of Education assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids and reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) ATTY. MACUR D. MAROHOMBSAR
BAC Vice Chairperson

DAVAO CITY—YOU WAKE UP at 2:30 a.m., hit the road by 3 a.m., and by 3:45 a.m. you are at the centennial airport. You see a long line. You talk to the chief security officer to let you through the VIP entrance. He obliges after you tell him—politely of course—who you are.

By 4 a.m., you are at the business class check-in counter.

"Do you have check-in item?"

Yes.

"No problem, sir."

In minutes, you have your boarding pass. By 4:05 a.m., you are at the Mabuhay Lounge. By 4:05, you have your bowl of chicken porridge. Ummm.

Next, you toast a piece of white bread. Cheese. Cream Cheese. Butter. Coffee.

You hear the barker at 4:30. By 4:45, you are seated. Seat belt fastened. Next, you doze off.

Those are the things I do for the PAL Interclub golf championships.

And more.

At the airport here—wow! It's become really international—you are met by Ken Angeles, a friend of many years. He brings me to his yellow-fit tux restaurant. Fried egg. Sunny side up. Polow na pingow. Chicken adobo. Fried longganisa. Steaming hot coffee.

Such are the things the PAL Interclub does to me. Luxuries you just don't get at the flick of a finger a la Henry Ford or Bill Gates.

Now, how about that?

After that sleep-inducing breakfast from Ken, I find myself being driven to Rancho Palos Verdes Golf and Country Club.

Now, who do you think is my driver?

Milton Liu? Ramon Aladio?

Bungbong Montemayor? Tonyboy Floirendo? Boyet Lim? Hector Mendoza?

All wrong.

Ok, Boy Angeles?

Wrong, again.

Aha, Mayor Duterte?

Uh-oh. Wrong, too.

Gov. Marby Piñol. Yeah, Governor Piñol was my driver.

Boy he can still drive.

As our Isuzu Alterra snaked its way to the mountain-top golf course near the banana plantation of Cito Lorenzo, my cell rang.

Hello, Mr. Chairman, what can I do for you?

"Where are you, buddy?"

"Am on board a brand new, no-place-yet Alterra, Mr. Chairman."

"Where are you headed to?"

"Palos Verdes"

And the Chairman said, "OK, am here already, all set to tee off."

And who is this Mr. Chairman I

The things I do for PAL Interclub

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

was talking to?

Who else but Domeng Duerne, PAL's vice president for the Visayas and Mindanao.

"Guess who's behind the wheel of the Alterra I'm on board now?"

No idea, Mr. Chairman.

"Your own nephew, who else?"

Hearing that, the PAL Interclub chair laughed heartily.

Albert Garcia, the Manila Times chief photographer, said: "Let him to make a guess."

"Aha, I know him," he said.

"He's Governor Piñol, your dear buddy, I know. Thank God, you are in good hands."

Ah, the things that I get to experience covering the PAL Interclub golf tournament.

Now, listen. The Chairman and I didn't get to close a friendly bet with Jake Ayson, a tradition that's been with us for years now.

"We'll do it tomorrow," said the chairman, who played in the Right of Bong Cruz, another esteemed friend from PAL.

Before the day ended, and after a sumptuous late, late lunch of lechon and prawns, the chairman says: "OK, the following will hit the ceremonial shots tomorrow to kick off the 59th PAL Men's Regular—Mayor Duterte, Vice Mayor Luis Bongoy, PSC commissioner Bungbong Montemayor, congressman Floirendo, and, of course, my great nephew, Governor Piñol."

Governor Piñol has only fond memories of his uncle, Domeng Duerne.

"We were playmates since we were kids," Governor Piñol said of Duerne. "We would build balls out of mud from the river banks of M'lang, North Cotabato, while we set off our carabao to graze in the grass. Ah, those were the days."

Let me end this piece, rushed

at the lobby of Apo View with lawyer Neil Dalumpines providing me music from his piano, by saying I played my last five holes at Palos Verdes without a putter.

... broke it.

Using my three-iron in the last five holes—I "three-ironed" three of the last five holes, what can you expect?—I lost some money to Jake.

Crack NCR booters start 'three-peat' bid vs Baguio

By Cedell P. Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

GAMES TODAY
(Barotac Nuevo field)
8:30 a.m.—NCR vs. Baguio
Sta. Barbara field
8:30 a.m.—North Cotabato
vs. Zamboanga
CPU field
8:30 a.m.—Negros Occidental
vs. Misamis
La Paz field
2:30 p.m.—Iloilo vs. Iligan

ILIOLO CITY—ON PAPER, NATIONAL CAPITAL Region's roster appears to be a shoo-in for the finals.

It's worth will be tested today when the NCR squad begins its quest for a third straight national crown against Baguio in the PFF-National Men's Open Football Championships at the Barotac Nuevo field here.

After the draw placed NCR in a bracket

alongside powerhouse Iloilo, the Big City booters hope to get the best out of Philippine team standouts Ali Borromeo, Emilio Caligdong and Ian Ananita as they gun for a "three-peat."

Tiger Cup veterans Borromeo and Caligdong boosted their stock when they led the AP team to a 4-2 conquest of Cambodia, breaking a 10-year losing spell in the Southeast Asian Games.

"We have a fighting team," NCRFA secretary general Jojo Rodriguez told the Inquirer.

Philippine Army team coach Greg Brillantes will call the shots for NCR, which will also have

Sebu Lozano and Luis Brillantes, as well as Negros-born players Gil Villanueva, Philip Caballero and Edward Sacapito in its fold.

The NCR-Baguio tussle is set at 8:30 a.m., simultaneous with the Negros Occidental-Misamis Group A match at the CPU field and the North Cotabato-Zamboanga tiff in another group match at the Sta. Barbara turf.

Host Iloilo, arguably the biggest stumbling block to the Big City booters' bid, also opens its campaign against Iligan at 2:30 p.m., shortly after the opening ceremonies at the La Paz field.

Iloilo is expected to bank on Ruben Dociba Jr., veterans Richmond Braga, SEAG campaigner Bervie Itaya, Jezuel Tonog and Ardesel Juarez, while Negros will be powered by RP Under-23 team right winger Arnie Pasmabo, ex-national player Al Rojas and Ziggy Tonog.

The event is organized by the Iloilo Football Association (IFA) in cooperation with Gov. Neil Tupas, Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas, IFA president Ramsay Pademal, and general secretary Joseph Gensaya. Sponsors include Red Ribbon Bakeshop, 2Go and Petron.

Lady Falcons clinch nat'l students crown

ADAMSON UNIVERSITY ROUTED ST. LOUIS of Baguio, 73-29, yesterday to capture the women's division title in the National Students Basketball Championships at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Pour Lady Falcons combined for 51 points as they completed a sweep of the division that also included UAAP champion Ateneo de Manila University and AMA Computer University, which were still playing for second place at press time.

"We're very fortunate this time unlike in our recent campaign in the UAAP," said Adamson coach Emelia Vega. "The team is getting stronger and the players are responding well to our adjustments."

The Lady Falcons finished runner-up to Ateneo in the UAAP.

The University of Visayas Lancers were the morning sensation as they clipped Manuel L. Quezon University, 73-64, for a third straight victory that set them up for a

vital outing with UAAP kingpin Far Eastern University as the top team in group B.

"Everybody has to play hard because we are not very complete as a team," said Elmer Cabahug, an ex-PBA sweet shooter who coaches UV along with fellow former pro and rifleman Al Solis.

UV is missing the services of Joseph Quinahan, who's nursing a leg injury.

Not to be outdone, the Tamaraws, still saving UAAP MVP Arwind Santos for last, toyed with Universidad de Zamboanga, 91-61, for their second victory in as many days in the event backed by San Miguel Corp., Petron and Aktivade.

NUC airs the highlights of the games from 3 to 4 p.m.

Wild Card entry and NCAA runner-up Philippine Christian University marched steps with Group A favorite and NCAA champion Lecran following a 95-38 rout of winless Tarlac State University, 95-38,

at the Emilio Aguinaldo Gym where the high school contests are being played.

PCU and Lecran stay undefeated in the five-team group but San Sebastian College-Recoletos of Cavite, which carries a 2-1 slate following a 91-64 triumph over Cordillera College, still cradles a shot at one of two crossover semifinals seats.

PCU's Baby Dolphins dumped Don Bosco Tarlac, 124-34, for win number three in group A even as UAAP champion La Salle Zobel dumped West Negros College, 99-60, for a 2-1 card.

In the other group, San Beda College secured a semifinals slot after besting University of Visayas, 78-66, and will wait for another confrontation with NCAA tormentor and titlist San Sebastian College, which is unbeaten in two games.

In a no-bearing match, St. Joseph of Zamboanga edged University of Perpetual Help-Laguna, 82-78, also in Group B.



CHAMP AND SON: Rory Sabbatini of South Africa hugs his son Harley, 2, after winning the Nissan Open golf tournament, Sunday, at Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles.

SPORTSWATCH

Min-Vis cage league opens Saturday

THE MINDANAO VISAYAS BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (MVBA) WILL launch its inaugural season this Saturday with 11 teams seeing action at the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology gym. A brainchild of basketball's Visayan prime movers Coach Vayoy Alcoba and Michel Lhuillier, the league will have boxing hero Manny Pacquiao as special guest during the opening ceremonies. Pacquiao's Pac-Man-General Santos squad is one of the five teams bracketed in the Mindanao Division. It will face Montalba Pawnshop-Davao of Armandio Quibod in the opening game at 5:30 p.m. Host Iligan City of Mayor Lawrence Cruz battles Misamis Oriental of MVBA chair Gov. Oscar S. Moreno in the main game at 7:30 p.m. The Capayon de Oro Rapids of Mayor Vicente Emano completes the Mindanao cast.

Rodrigo TKO's Doliguez in Tagaytay

FORMER PHILIPPINE FLYWEIGHT CHAMPION EDGAR RODRIGO OVERCAME a second-round knockdown to score a technical knockout victory over 11th-ranked WBO junior bantamweight Roy Doliguez in the eighth round of their scheduled 10-rounder in the "Bakbakan sa Tagaytay" in Tagaytay City recently. The fight was too close to call until Rodrigo, who floored Doliguez in the third round, caught Doliguez with a right straight to the jaw and sent him to the canvas again. Referee E. Nobleza eventually stopped the fight. In the other main event of the card arranged by Jun Samrat and held in coordination with Mayor Abraham "Bamboo" Tolentino, PBF junior welter champ Amiel Tinampay kept his title via unanimous decision win over Jerry Noda.

NCA 7-cocker resumes tomorrow

MORE THAN 60 QUALITY FIGHTS FEATURING THE "PERSONAL CHOICES" of some of the country's most famous sportsmen were showcased in the National Cocker Association's 7-cock derby at the Rizal Mega Cockpit in Paranaque City yesterday. The derby resumes tomorrow. Leading the participants are the tandem of Danding Coquangco and Riza Bow, Ito Ynares, Chevit Singon, Mike and Art Azaide and their American partner CW Lanes and Rudy Albano, among others. The NCA, the premier and most prestigious organization of gamefowl sportsmen in the country, said that the forthcoming fights will be conducted in the best Filipino tradition of honesty, integrity, fairness and transparency. The membership of the NCA comprises the virtual Who's Who in Philippine cockfighting.

Araneta derby slates 120 fights

BREEDERS BELONGING TO THE LUZON-BASED GAMECOCK BREEDERS Association (LGBA) clash in the Philippine Heritage Cup 2006 5-cock derby today and on Thursday at the Araneta Coliseum. Due to the big number of fights in the derby sponsored by Gran Matador and 8-Meg Derby Ace, each participant will be required to field five cocks either today or Thursday. The first of more than 120 fights starts at 11 a.m. Seeing action are entries from different breeders groups such as Batangas Breeders Club, Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association and the Gamefowl Breeders Association of Tarlac. Each derby day dangles a cash pot of P600,000 for an entry fee of P10,000.



IN THE HUNT: Juvic Pagunsan. RONNIE HOMILLADA

Juvic returns to scene of SEA Games victory

FRESHMAN PRO JUVIC PAGUNSAN REVISTS the scene of perhaps his biggest victory as an amateur when he sees action in the P4 million The Country Club Invitational beginning Thursday at The Country Club course in Canlubang, Laguna.

Although he has already debuted as a pro in the recent Pakistan Open, where he finished in joint 36th and won \$1,400, this marks the first time that Pagunsan will play for cash at home.

The 27-year-old shotmaker scored his last victory as an amateur in the Southeast Asian Games last December over the tough par-70 layout.

Pagunsan closed out with a bogey-free, eagle-spiked seven-under-par 65 to win by a huge 12 shots over Thailand's Wasayalad Eklaak in individual play and power the RP squad to a 17-shot win over Singapore in team play.

He finished with 13-under 267, breaking par in all four rounds.

But against the likes of defending champion Jerome Delanarve, former titlist Cassius Casas and Tony Lascuna, and the rest of the elite 32-

player field, Pagunsan is expected to encounter stiff resistance in his hunt for the top P1.2 million winner's purse staked in the P4.2 million invitational.

"I used to play for flag and country, but now I will be playing for pride and money," said Pagunsan in Filipino. "But it will be tough [to win this time] because the field is strong."

Organizers of the event, put up by Enrique K. Razon Jr. three years ago to honor the memory of his father, Don Pocholo, actually seeded the top 21 finishers of last year's tournament.

The rest of the field were tapped to play by sponsors.

The 32-player cast includes Cesar Ababa, Edgar Ababa, Rey Ait, Erwin Arcillas, Eddie Bayas, Ramil Bisera, Roger Cabajar, Dan Cruz, Rodolfo Cuello, Rodrigo Cuello, Ricky Marcol; Peter Muxka, Ronald Pachtler, Juanito Pagunsan, Elmer Salvador, Carito Villaroman, Artemio Murakami, Marlon Dizon, Rey Pagunsan, Benjie Magada, Richard Sinfuego and Ruben Sasuri.

Blazers thwart Generals; Warriors score

STANDINGS

Men's basketball (as of Feb. 17)—REU 5-2; San Beda 4-1; Ateneo 3-2; La Salle 3-2; UE 3-2; EAC 2-4; UST 1-2; St. Benilde 2-3; Lyceum 0-4.

Women's basketball (as of Feb. 17)—UST 1-1; La Salle 3-1; Lyceum 2-3; UST 1-1; St. Benilde 1-3; JE 1-2; EAC 1-5.

THE COLLEGE OF ST. BENILDE Blazers bucked a hostile crowd to turn back Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals at the EAC gym, 57-54, even as the University of the

East Warriors blasted powerhouse Far Eastern U Tamaraws, 88-61, at home in the men's basketball tournament of the Home and Away Invitational League over the weekend.

St. Benilde gunner Martin Urra led the Blazers with 23 points in foiling the Generals, who led 28-24 at the half but were stymied by the victors' tough defense in the second.

Christopher Layug chipped in

eight points while Archie David and Christian Cabatu added seven apiece, as the Blazers improved to 2-3.

Karlo Marcos-Castillo top-scored with 17 points for the Generals, who dropped to 2-4.

The Warriors improved to 3-2 in a three-way logjam for third place with the La Salle Archers and the Ateneo Eagles. The Tamaraws absorbed their third loss in eight games.

Torres-Uy pair dominates Eagle Ridge scramble

KARLYN KHEY TORRES AND RIZALINA UY combined for a net 12-under-par 60 in scramble play to top the ladies division of members monthly tournament of the giant Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite, recently.

Scoring a gross of 83 at the Faldo course, Torres and Uy won by six shots over the Korean tandem of Hee Seo-See Eun Yang in the 18-hole tournament supported by Sun Cellular.

The seniors plus went to Rosendo Cruz and Uriel Halim whose 61 named back the pair of Gerry Collado-Renato Jimilang by a stroke.

Park Seong Pyo-Kim Young Sook topped Division I, Koo Jae Min-Park Haye Jin took Division II, while Renato Kapacan-Stephen Albano prevailed in Division III.

Park Kim's combined 62 was a shot better than the score of Rogelio Muyot-Dae Yang Hong.

Koo Park (58) finished three shots ahead of Joong Kang-Kyung Ae Roh, while Kapacan-Albano named in the tournament's lowest net of 56 to win by two over Gregorio Poblador-Joel Belardo.



NBC CHAMPS: Members of Spring Cooling Oil team celebrate after receiving their trophy from former Tagaytay mayor Isaac Tolentino (right) and Pagadian Mayor Sammy Co (second from right) Saturday. National shooting champion Nathaniel "Tec" Padilla's Spring cagers nipped Pagadian, 72-71, to bag the title in the National Basketball Conference's pre-season tournament.

20 bets enter P1M poker main tilt

TWENTY SATELLITE TOURNAMENT WINNERS have qualified for the main event of the Philippine Poker Tour (PPT) Million-Peso Hold'em Philippine Championship slated April 8 and 9 at the Airport Casino-Filipino in Paranaque. The first national poker champion will be determined after the finals of the non-wager series. Apart from the P1 million worth of prizes, the grand finals winner will bring home a champion's bracelet, according to organizing committee chair Ray Gamboa. The 20 satellite winners: Anthony Gabitan, recently crowned Poker King Challenge champion; Mike Tyler, Pico Ching, Cuy-cuy Makabenta, Bobby Atienza, Jason Fung, Dr. Butch Javer, Marlon Chavez, Marvin Cu, Mel Aroa, Dennis Gambo, Arts Apilon, Vincent Ong, Bitoy, Ryan Paolo Mercado, Tony Uson, Jonathan Francisco, Aca Stahmeyer, Ernesto Laman and July Bule. For inquiries, call the PPT secretariat at 817-9092 or 812-0153.



YOUNGSTERS' HOUR: Maimpis Elementary School-Pampanga 12-under team beam with youthful energy as they wait for the game in the Chery-Tangkod Sagad Basketball Tournament at the People's Gym in San Fernando City recently. The Maimpis dribblers are among the hundreds of public school students benefiting from the basketball program also supported by Adidas.

BY TOP CHOICE

(6) Irish Connection (5); Sharp Cookie (10); Ali Al Ah (8); (7)—Maglie (7); El Cid (10); Princess Indy (9); Miss Sa (10); (8)—Penta/Tri—Playmaster (9); Hard to Find/Humble Guest (2); High Spirit (12); Supadude/Panbogho (8); Vantage (6); (9)—Gallan Warrior (2); Nothing to Decare (1); Cool Reception (2); Worth It While (8); (10)—Sir Guy (11); Reporter (2); A Signoria (8); Spinney Bulot (7); Al Ah Cost (3); Race 8—(Or/Tri)—Pamisanhmanan (4).



Orcollo rules qualifier, gets IPT tour card

LOS ANGELES—PHILIPPINE "MONEY GAME" King Dennis Orcollo introduced himself to US shores in spectacular fashion, nailing an International Pool Tour card in his first try Sunday.

The 27-year-old Orcollo topped the winner's bracket (B) and then overcame a 1-6 deficit to beat former US Open champion Oliver Ortmann, 10-6, in the final match held at the Hard Times Billiards here at Bellflower.

Ortmann capitalized on two errors by Orcollo to post a 3-1 edge. He then broke and ran the next three racks but came up dry on the following break.

The momentum then swung the opposite direction. Orcollo studied every shot and calmly executed a table-length kick shot that sent the ball into the corner pocket. Ortmann didn't win another game as Orcollo reached the hill by taking the next eight games. Orcollo then broke and ran the final rack.

"With this win I can now express my gratitude to my manager (Perry Mariano) who is celebrating his birthday this 20th of February and my supporters Col. Jere Villacorte and Maj. Pete Laraya," said Orcollo, a gold medalist in the 23rd SEA Games.

Orcollo's victory netted him an IPT card needed to compete in the 2006 season. The IPT is hosting six major tournaments for the year with over \$8 million in prize money at stake.

"He (Orcollo) feels very, very happy," Mariano said after receiving a call from Orcollo yesterday morning. "Birthday gift day nuya sa akin ang kanyang panalo. He can't believe that he's now holding his IPT card."

"He believes that the IPT will be his passport to fame. Imagine the hardships that Dennis went through to go to the US. He applied for visa thrice and was denied twice. He wanted to be at the very first tournament and luckily he was given a visa and won the event," Mariano added. "I've been supporting him even in his early years because I know that he'd go places."

En route to the finals, Orcollo beat Steve Linkebach (10-1), M. Hybler (10-4), Michael Schmidt (10-5) and Richard Broumpton (10-3).

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SHAQUILLE O'Neal hangs on the rim after a dunk. AP

McEnroe gets back winning feeling at 47

SAN JOSE—JOHN MCENROE CAPPED his comeback to the ATP Tour with a surprise doubles victory in the SAP Open final on Sunday, the veteran partnering Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman to a 7-6, 4-6, 10-7 win over Paul Goldstein and Jim Thomas.

Appearing in his first ATP tournament since 1994, the 47-year-old American displayed plenty of the trademark deft touches that once made him the number one player in the world.

"I didn't know what was going to happen, but I felt good that first day, so I thought we had a chance," McEnroe told reporters after the contest.

"The key to success is working together with your partner and picking a good partner and I did that. We pumped each other up."

"They beat the first and third seeds and we beat the second and fourth, so we knew it was coming down to the end."

"Not surprisingly it went to the final tiebreak, but the right team won."

McEnroe's 78th doubles title came 14 seasons after his last, won with brother Patrick at the Paris Indoors in November 1992.

While McEnroe sports a full head of grey hair and has slowed his pace around the



MCENROE last won the doubles in 1992. AP

court, the seven-times grand slam champion stood firm against the weight of his opponent's heavy shots.

Although he has a busy schedule of television broadcasting and senior events this year, McEnroe did not rule out playing another ATP tournament.

"Maybe I can find some of the younger American guys to play with," he said.

"I've got to enjoy this for a little bit, so I'm going to take a few months off and then go back to where I belong on the seniors tour and then enjoy this (win) and let them think about (this win) for a little and we'll see what develops."

Reuters

Doping scandal rocks Games; Italy cops gold

TURIN, ITALY—THE COACH AT THE CENTER OF a doping scandal rocking the Turin Winter Games slammed his car into an Austrian police roadblock Sunday, hours after Italian police raided the rooms of Austrian staff and athletes at the Olympics.

Walter Mayer, Austria's Nordic coach, was involved in the crash close to the border with Italy after leading police on a brief chase and slightly injuring one officer by hitting him with his car, Austrian police said in a statement. Mayer was taken into custody.

He had been banned from the Olympics under suspicion of performing blood transfusions at the 2002 Salt Lake City Games and his presence at the Turin Games last week sparked raids by police and the International Olympic Committee Saturday night.

The Austrian Ski Federation said Sunday night it had ended its relationship with Mayer effective immediately. Federation president Peter

Schroecksnadel cited the accident as the reason in a brief statement. He did not elaborate.

Away from the scandal, Italy celebrated its third gold medal of the games when its men's cross-country team won the 4x10-kilometer relay. And on the speedskating track, veteran Marianne Timmer of the Netherlands won gold in the 1,000 eight years after winning the same race in Nagano.

The last gold of the day was the least unexpected. Favorites Andre Lange and Kevin Kuske of Germany won the men's two-man bobsled.

But the day was dominated by news that Carabinieri paramilitary police swooped on the Austrian cross-country and biathlon teams in their mountain accommodation overnight, while the IOC conducted doping tests on at least 10 Austrian cross-country skiers and biathletes.

Germany replaced the US atop the medal board with seven gold and 18 overall. The Americans had seven gold and 13 medals. AP



THE JAPANESE pair of Nozomi Watanabe and Akiyuki Kudo performs in the Ice Dancing Original Dance event during the Figure Skating competition at the 2006 Winter Olympics, Feb. 19 at the Palavela in Turin. AP

Football chiefs rap sec-gen

SINGAPORE—ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST Asian Nations football chiefs have lashed out at a senior Asian soccer administrator, criticizing him for doing nothing to help the game in their region.

The broadside was delivered against Asian Football Confederation (AFC) secretary general Peter Velappan in a letter sent to Fifa president Sepp Blatter, seen by AFP.

It follows comments by Velappan at the launch of a Fifa management program last week in which he called Southeast Asian soccer chiefs' leadership unprofessional while

criticizing Fifa for not training them properly.

"The jarring thing about his criticism is that he has been the AFC secretary general for the past 27 years during which time he did little or nothing to uplift standards in Ascan," said the letter signed by 22 senior Asian football officials and sent to Blatter last Thursday.

"Only after the formation of the Ascan Football Federation in 1994 and the inception of the Fifa Goal Project earlier this decade have Ascan countries been able to plan and implement systematic programs for football development. AFP



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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde



Tonyboy's dream dashed

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ANTONIO "TONYBOY" COJUANGCO'S dream of building digital theaters was thwarted almost two years ago.

"I wanted to show digital films on Dream's pay-per-view channels; acquiring 35mm films was more expensive," Cojuangco, one of the owners of Philippine Multi-Media Systems Inc., operator of Dream Satellite TV, told *Inquirer* in an exclusive interview. "With digital technology, young filmmakers have been coming up with good products at a very [low] cost."

He took the idea one step further:

"My company studied the viability of putting up Dream Theaters all over the country. We'd build 1,000 digital theaters with a seating capacity of 80 to 100 people each. We'd furnish vacant spaces in malls with screens, chairs and sound systems ... at the cost of only P150,000 per theater."

He foresaw astounding profits. "All I would need is one disc [of a movie], which costs P500. I can beam it to moviehouses via satellite. If 20,000 people watched and paid P30 each, I'd make P600,000 per screening. With three screenings in a day, I'd gross P1.8 million!"

Going digital is the wave of the future, he said.

In March 2002, major Hollywood studios joined forces and created Digital Cinema initiatives. Doug Miller, executive vice president and managing director of Walt Disney International Asia Pacific, told *Inquirer* last year that digital cinemas would render 35mm film superfluous. "Dig it, theaters will download movies from a server."

It works, Cojuangco stressed. "The Manny Pac-

quiao-Eric Morales boxing rematch was beamed to SM Cinemas via satellite [by Solar Sports] through Dream. They charged P300." It was a hit, and was quickly followed by the Brian Viloria-Jose Antonio Aguirre match last Sunday.

Unfortunately, his digital dream hit a brick wall. "Distributors and malls refused to cooperate," he said.

Cojuangco teamed up with filmmaker Laurice Guillen and Nes Jardin of the Cultural Center of the Philippines to put up the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival.

After a successful launch last year, the second Cinemalaya will unveil 10 full-length and 10 short digital films in July.

It's a start, said Cojuangco. "Cinemalaya is a small version of my big plan."

DID YOU KNOW...

GEORGE Yang, president of McDonald's Philippines, sang with Kuh Ledesma and Pops Fernandez during the duo's Valentine show at the Mandarin.

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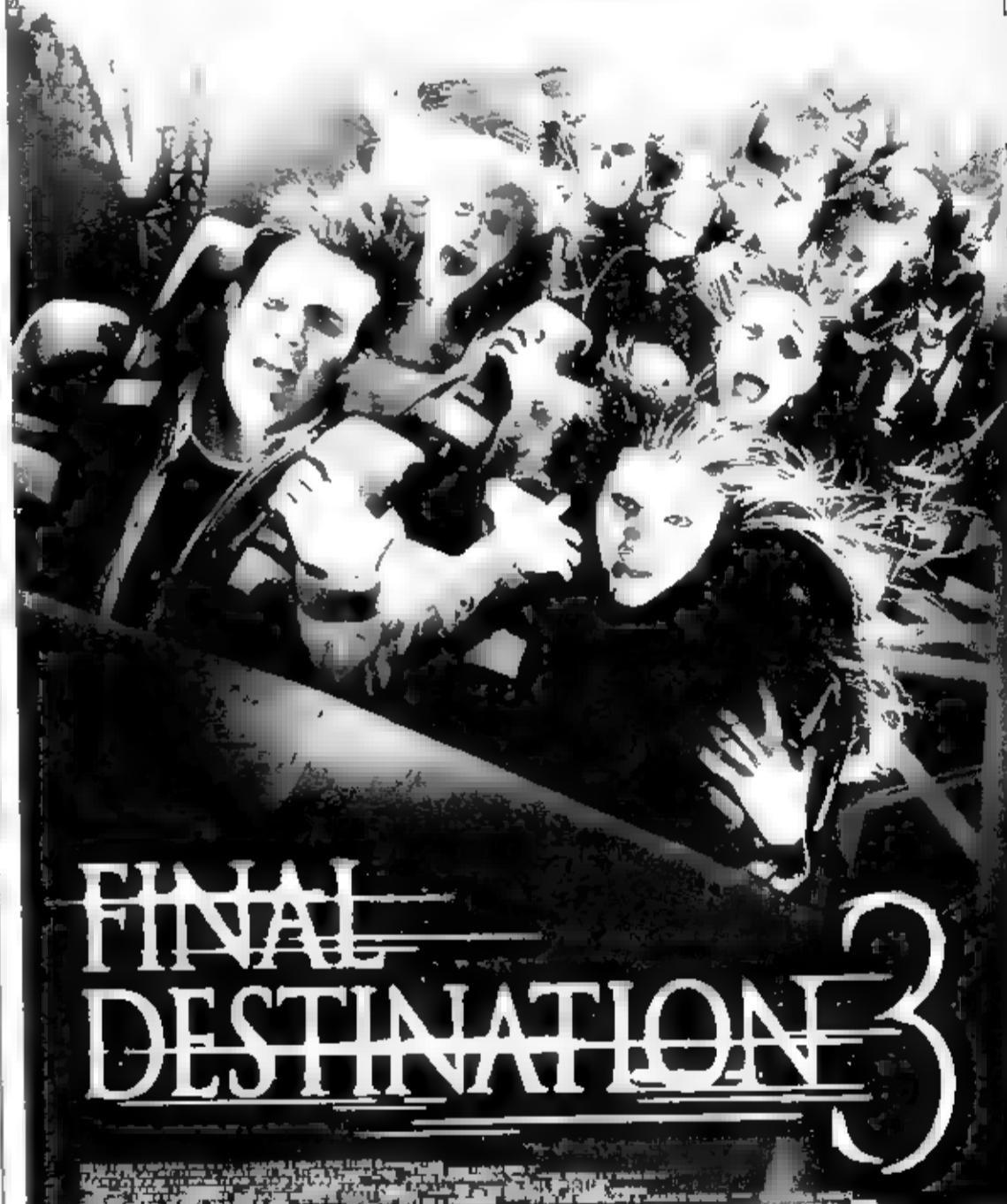
Nora's Day

Mowelfund's "Pelikula at Lipunan" will hold a Nora Aunor Day on Feb. 25. Two award-winning movies—Mario O'Hara's "Tatlong Taong Waang Duyos" and "Buakak ng City Jail"—will be shown at the Gateway Mall. The first is a love triangle set in World War II; the latter is a contemporary drama about a woman wrongfully imprisoned.

An exhibit of the actress' photos and memorabilia will also be held. Festival proceeds will help build the Mowelfund film archves. Visit www.geocities.com/peli.kuwaatlipunan2006

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GALLERIA

| | |
|--|---|
| 1 MUNICH - THX 12:30 4:00 7:15 10:00 | 6 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 1:30 4:20 7:15 10:00 |
| 2 CLOSE TO YOU 12:30 2:45 5:10 7:30 10:00 | 7 FIREWALL 1:20 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00 |
| 3 GOAL 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00 | 8 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU 1:20 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00 |
| 4 AEON FLUX 11:00 1:10 2:20 6:30 7:40 9:30 | 9 NEW WORLD 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00 |
| 5 PINK PANTHER 11:00 1:10 3:20 6:30 7:40 9:30 | 10 FUN with DICK and JANE 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:30 |

ERMITA

| | |
|--|---|
| 1 CLOSE TO YOU 10:30 12:00 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00 | 5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00 |
| 2 FUN with DICK and JANE 12:00 2:20 NEW WORLD 4:45 7:15 8:30 | 6 PINK PANTHER 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00 |
| 3 GOAL 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:30 | 7 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU 1:20 2:30 5:10 7:30 10:00 |
| 4 AEON FLUX 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:20 10:00 | 8 NEW WORLD 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00 |

METRO EAST

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| 1 FUN with DICK and JANE 12:30 2:50 4:50 6:50 8:00 | 5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 12:55 3:10 5:05 9:00 |
| 2 CLOSE TO YOU 11:15 1:45 4:15 6:45 8:15 | 6 FIREWALL 1:20 2:45 4:50 6:55 8:00 |
| 3 NEW WORLD 12:40 3:20 5:10 9:00 | 7 PINK PANTHER 11:45 2:05 4:25 6:45 8:05 |
| 4 GOAL 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 8:00 | 8 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU 1:20 3:25 5:30 7:35 |

NOVALICHES

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 AEON FLUX 2 GOAL 3 FIREWALL | 4 PINK PANTHER 5 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU 6 CLOSE TO YOU 7 FUN with DICK and JANE |
|-------------------------------------|--|

CITISQUARE MALABON

PIONEER

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU | 1 AEON FLUX |
| 2 CLOSE TO YOU | 2 PINK PANTHER |
| 3 RESERVE | 3 CLOSE TO YOU |
| 4 RESERVE | 4 GOAL |

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ENTERTAINMENT

A2-3

Piolo Pascual still 'pambansang' crush

ALMOST EVERY GIRL AND GAY I KNOW HAS a big crush on Piolo Pascual. He could very well be declared Pambansang Crush, huh?

What makes PJ even more endearing is that he's not stuck-up at all. It was such a delight to meet up with him during the press con of his latest teleserye with Judy Ann Santos ("Sa Piling Mo"). Their successful love team is reunited in this drama about the emotional journey of love and sacrifice. Hot in the heels of their multimillion-grossing movie, "Don't Give Up On Us," this new vehicle for Judy and PJ from ABS-CBN makes the most of their compelling chemistry and dramatic brilliance. This must-see TV event is directed by three of the network's finest—Jerry Lopez Sinaneng, Trina Dayrit and Rory B. Quintos.

It has a mature story line centered on two lovers who are separated by a cruel twist of fate. Jennifer (Judy) grew up with Adrian (Piolo), who has been blind since childhood. Despite his handicap, he is full of life—something readily apparent when he shows his talent for singing. It isn't long before they fall in love. Jennifer soon learns that Adrian's blindness can still be cured, if he can be operated on in a year's time. Beyond that period, his affliction will become permanent.

Determined to help Adrian, Jennifer participates in a crime for which she is caught and imprisoned. Will Adrian see again? Or will Jennifer's sacrifice be in vain? And will the separated lovers find their way back to each other? These questions will be answered in the teleserye. Meanwhile, it's time to ask Piolo some questions many have always wanted to ask but were just too mesmerized to do so. Read on and swoon.

What is the secret of your charisma?

I don't usually answer self-promoting questions but for you, I will. I believe God has a lot to do with it. Call it destiny or a path He wants me to take. On the other hand, I owe it to my parents for having brought me up this way with the right values and attitude. Charisma—you think I have it? (Flashes his killer smile)

Some people say that Sam Milby and you have a striking resemblance?

I'm flattered! Sam is a nice guy. Guapo pa, so at least ang kamukha ko guapo. That means guapo nge daw ako (laughs).

Your love team with Judy chickens even if you're not a couple in real life.

With Judy, it's always magic. Neither one of us can pinpoint what makes our love team sell, but we are grateful that it does. We are so comfy with each other.

In whose "piling" are you right now?

(Chuckles) I'm still waiting for God to send the right person. Yahoo! I know she's just around. Medyo busy din ako and right now, I just want to spend time with my son while he's still young. She'll come in God's perfect time.

How did you prepare for your role as a blind man? Do you have any dream role?

I watched Al Pacino's "Scent of a Woman" and Jerry Gonzalo (a blind model) coached me. My

ROUNDUP

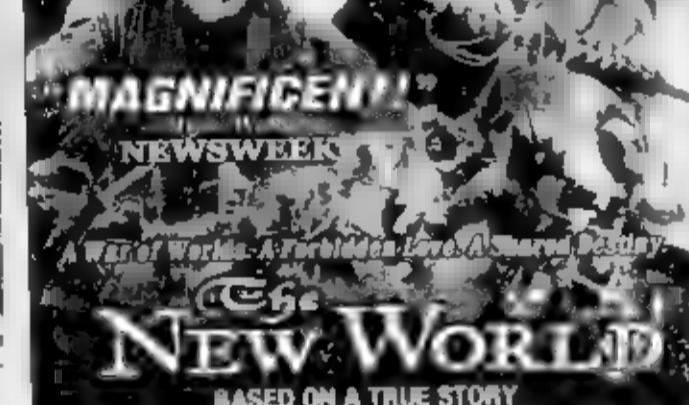
Hernia

LONDON—American superstar Madonna has been treated for a hernia but is now "absolutely fine," her spokeswoman said on Thursday.

The singer, who performed at the Grammy awards in Los Angeles last week, reappeared in public on Thursday night when she accepted a Brit record industry statuette in London as Best International Female Artist of the year.

"She had a minor procedure for a hernia," the spokeswoman said, declining to elaborate.

The 47-year-old mother of two, widely regarded as one of the finest stars in the pop business, is seen in a lycra leotard doing the splits at full stretch in the video for her latest single "Sorry."



LISA Marie Presley with Michael Lockwood

Married again

LOS ANGELES—Singer Lisa Marie Presley, the only child of Elvis, has married her guitarist, Michael Lockwood, a collaborator on her 2005 album "Now What," a wedding held last month in Kyoto, Japan, her spokesman said on Thursday.

The couple exchanged vows in a traditional Japanese service conducted on Jan. 22, with the bride's first husband and close friend, musician Danny Keough, serving as best man, and her mother, Priscilla Presley, walking her down the aisle to give her away.

Keough is the father of Lisa Marie Presley's two children, daughter Riley, who was her maid of honor, and son, Benjamin, who was a groomsman.

It was the fourth altar trip for Presley, 38, 10 years after her surprise marriage to pop star Michael Jackson ended in divorce. She later married Oscar-winning actor Nicolas Cage. They divorced in 2004.

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal



role as a blind man is challenging and interesting but the hardest one and most physically exhausting so far is my role in "Delada." I have no dream role. Anything that's different from my character, aguro.

Birthday girl

RUFU. Mae Quinto is all agog preparing for her birthday concert in May which coincides with her 12th anniversary in show biz. The bombshell announced, "I'll spoof Madonna, Beyoncé, Britney and JLo. There will also be a video of how I started in show biz. It will be raining men in my concert!" Just listening to her animated stories, I can already tell that it's gonna be one helluva "Chuya" night!

CloseUp movie

CLOSEUP goes one giant leap forward in making dreams come true for the winners of its recently concluded Close Up to Film promo. The winners got guest appearances in "Close to You," the hit movie of John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo and Sam Milby. Plus, they got to walk the red carpet with the stars at the Valentine's Day premiere in SM Cinema. The lucky ones—Faith Echano of Marikina, Giannie Carlo Chua of Davao and Lisa Caballero of Cebu are still ecstatic over this chance of a lifetime. As Faith puts it "I never realized what actors have to go through!"

Rivermaya's gold

RIVERMAYA's "Greatest Hits 2006: The Ultimate Collection" turned gold within a week of its release. The album contains the SEA Games anthem, "Possible," and other classics such as "Alab Ng Puso (Tagumpay)," "Umaaraw, Umuulan" and "Wag na Imit Ulo Baby." To book the "Banda Bayan" call 812-1350 or (0917) 428-0450

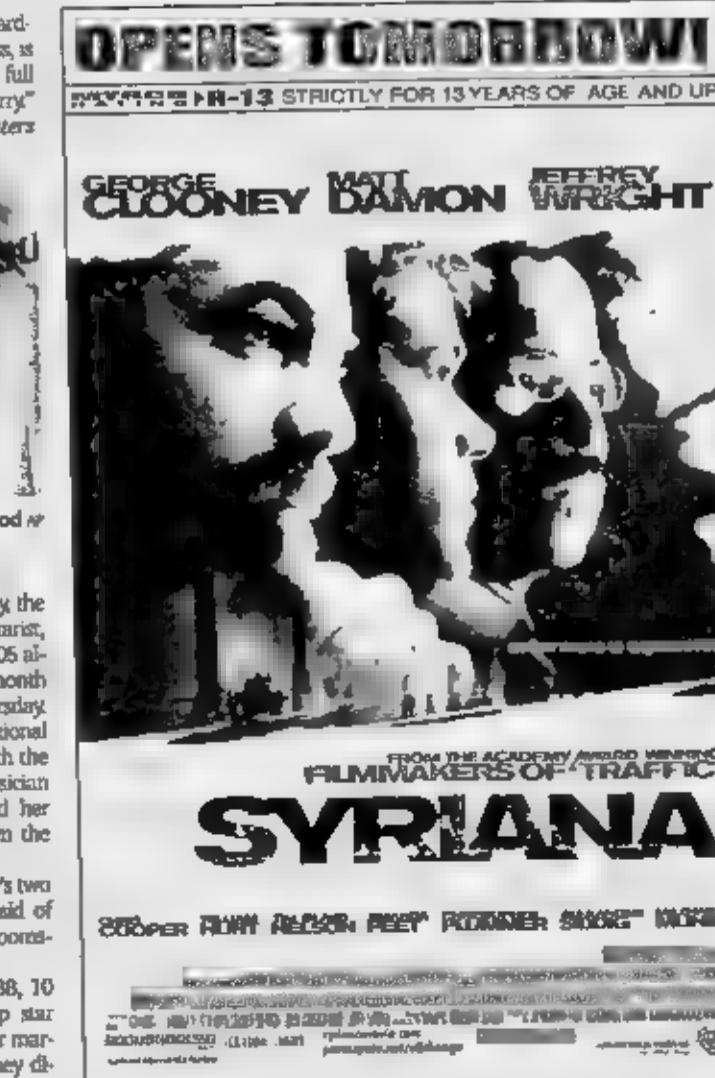
(E-mail: wateringsholeshangrila@yahoo.com)



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| | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| G1 | 1 PINK PANTHER | 2 CLOSE TO YOU | 3 FIREWALL | 4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU |
| G4 | 1 PINK PANTHER | 2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN | 3E FIREWALL 1 10 3 10 GUARANTEED SEATS | 4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU |
| GB1 | 4 GOAL | 5 FUN WITH DICK & JANE | 6 CLOSE TO YOU | 7 AEON FLUX |
| GB3 | 1 PINK PANTHER 1 05 3 15 5 25 9 45 | 2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 11 15 2 00 4 45 7 30 10 10 | 3E FIREWALL 2 00 4 15 GUARANTEED SEATS | 4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU |
| ATC | 1 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 3 05 5 50 8 35 11 20 GUARANTEED SEATS | 22 FIREWALL 2 00 4 15 GUARANTEED SEATS | 3 MUNICH 3 10 4 40 7 50 11 00 GUARANTEED SEATS | 4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU |
| ACC | 1 PINK PANTHER | 2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN | 3 CLOSE TO YOU | 4 MUNICH |
| | 1 PINK PANTHER | 2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN | 3 CLOSE TO YOU | 4 AEON FLUX |

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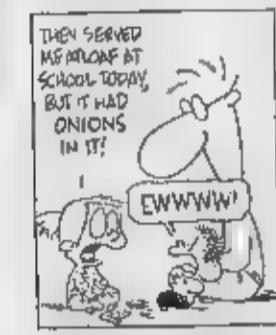
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR



BY P.M. JUNIOR

BABY BLUES



BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



BY PATRICK McDONNELL

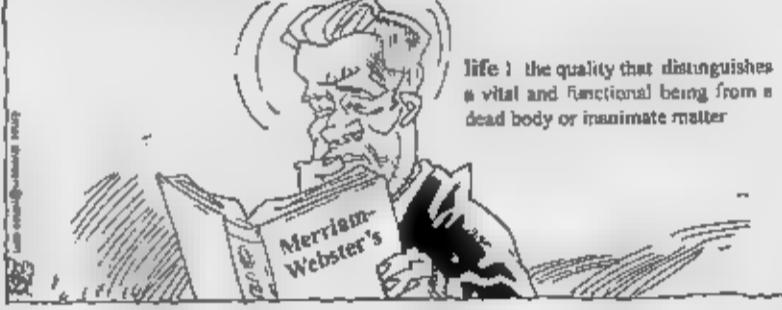
ATOMO AND WEBOY



BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



life: the quality that distinguishes a vital and functional being from a dead body or inanimate matter

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a complex, emotional individual who feels the need to share your artistic and personal feelings with others. This bodes well for artists. You understand what makes others tick. You want to become a better person. In the year ahead, you're going to work very hard to build or construct something important to you. Birthdate of: Nina Simone, singer; Charlotte Church, singer; Alan Rickman, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You might make long-range plans about children today, especially with regard to their education. Later in the day, surprise news from the media interests you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with partners are practical and serious today. However, discussions with bosses might catch you by surprise. Unusual glitches with technology are likely.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're serious about your sense of responsibility regarding children today. Arrows can make long-range plans about their work. However, support from others might be jeopardized.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Now is the time to make financial plans, especially about shared property or something you hold jointly with someone else. Someone unusual or a group or a friend has surprising news today.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You find it easy to do careful, detailed work today. You won't make mistakes. Your powers of concentration are excellent. Be prepared for computer crashes or power out-

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Family discussions about future plans are productive today. Someone unusual might surprise you at home. Small appliances could break down today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel very serious and sober about some issue today. You're giving it a lot of thought.

You might want to replace some kind of technology because you see that it is unreliable.

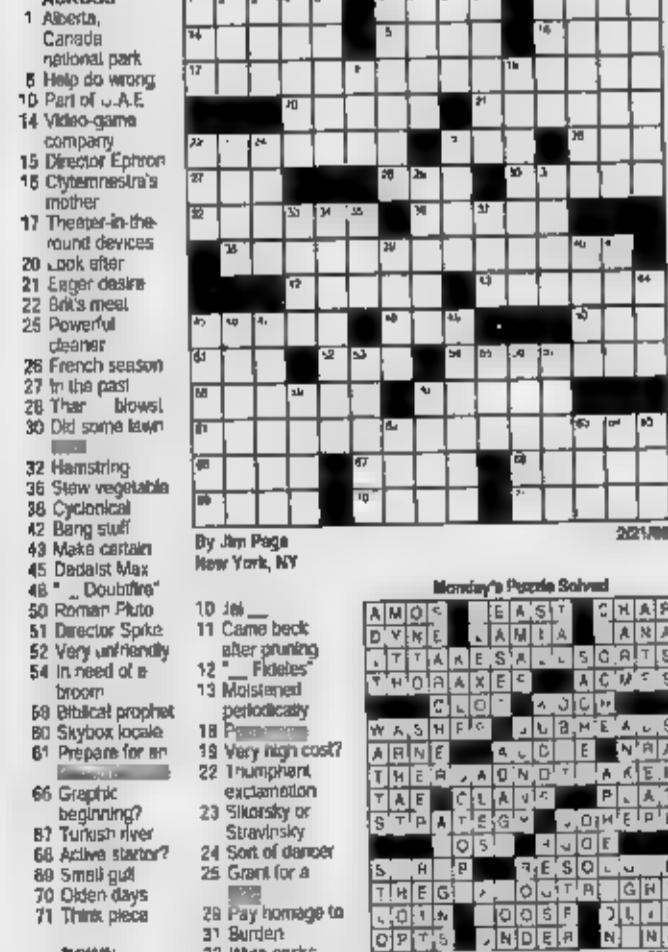
SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): If you shop today, you will want to buy practical, long-lasting items. Interruptions due to entertaining diversions are likely. You might spontaneously buy something hi-tech or modern.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're in a serious frame of mind today. You're taking a long-range view of things. Interruptions having to do with home and family are likely. You might get a call at work.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with bosses about your future on the job are likely today. Listen to what is said. Even though you feel rebellious about something, don't quit your day job.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

By Jim Page
New York, NY

Monday's Puzzle Solved

| | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|-------|----------|----------|
| 10 | Job | AMOC | EAST | CHAP |
| 11 | Came back after punning | DYNE | LAMIA | ARA |
| 12 | Fidels? | TY | TAKE | SLANTS |
| 13 | Moltenized periodically | THOR | AXE | ACME'S |
| 18 | Very high cost? | CLO | 40 | JCH |
| 22 | Thumperish exclamation | WASHF | 12 | MEALS |
| 23 | Silksky or Stravinsky | ARNE | 4 | ENRA |
| 24 | Sort of dancer | THEH | 4 | AKEN |
| 25 | Grant for a | TAE | CLAV | PLAT |
| 28 | Pay homage to | SPATE | 4 | HEPE |
| 31 | Burden | OS | 4 | JOE |
| 33 | Wine casks | 3 | RESOLVE | |
| 34 | Sign in a way | H | 4 | OUTRIGHT |
| 35 | Summer hrs. in Boston | OTPS | 4 | INDERN |
| 37 | Pique | 4 | JOEL | NA |
| 38 | West Point team | 4 | JOSE | |
| 40 | Sculptor's subject | 4 | RESOLVE | |
| 41 | Tap trouble | 4 | OUTRIGHT | |
| 44 | Superlative | 4 | INDERN | |
| 45 | Bring out | 4 | JOEL | |

| | | | | |
|----|--------------------|----|-------------------|--|
| 48 | Dwell | 59 | P.C. Images | |
| 49 | Closer to the mark | 50 | Cities of | |
| 50 | Most certain | 51 | Part of a train | |
| 53 | Cut-price | 52 | Bonus NFL periods | |
| 55 | Unused | 53 | Death | |
| 56 | Trapper's device | 54 | Salaries | |
| 57 | Gift | 55 | Safety source | |

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Seek out advice from someone older or more experienced than you. You could get some good, solid help. A friend might surprise you with money or a gift. Alternatively, you might lose money or a gift.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with bosses about your future on the job are likely today. Listen to what is said. Even though you feel rebellious about something, don't quit your day job.

KIKO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA



BY MANIX ABRERA



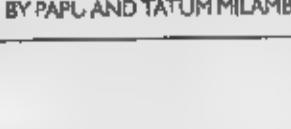
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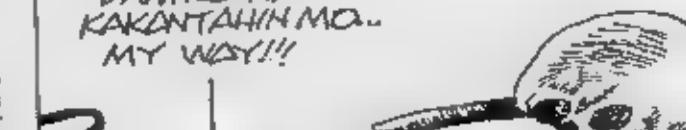
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LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBING



BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBING



BUSINESS

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91-day T-bill rate rises to 5.25%

Banks flock to longer term securities

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BELLWETHER 91-DAY TREASURY BILL RATE ROSE 16.3 BASIS POINTS TO 5.25 PERCENT YESTERDAY AS THE MARKET SOUGHT HIGHER RETURNS FROM THE THREE-MONTH GOVERNMENT SECURITIES.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee gave in to the higher rate to align it with the yield of the short-term paper in the secondary market.

"The market has been trading at higher rates this time. We want to respect the market," Cruz said in a briefing after the auction. He added that the willingness of banks to seek

a higher rate for the 91-day bills was sensible, given the trend in the secondary market.

He added that a 16.3-basis-point increase was minimal and something the government could afford.

Treasury bill rates have been declining across all maturities following the upgrade in the country's credit rating outlook by Fitch Ratings and Standard & Poor's.

The market showed more appetite for the longer-dated 182- and 364-day paper. Bids for the three-month securities reached only P1.06 billion, making the P1-billion offering a little over-subscribed.

Tenders for the 182-day bills reached P4.7 billion compared with the P1 billion on auction, while bids for the one-year debt paper stood at P7.34 billion, much higher than the P1.5-billion offering.

The high volume of bids for the 182- and 364-day bills pulled their rates lower. The six-month bills fetched 6.114 percent, or 5.4 basis points down than last week's, while the yield of the one-year securities also declined by 5.4 basis points.

PAL STILL UNHAPPY

RP, Bahrain reach air accord

By Clark S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES AND BAHRAM finally signed a new air services agreement shortly before Sunday midnight, allowing Bahrain's Gulf Air to mount two additional flights to Manila if it will agree to use and pay for Philippine Airlines' four unused entitlements to the Gulf kingdom.

The Civil Aeronautics Board, one of the members of the Philippine air panel, said it was pleased with the results of the protracted air talks, originally scheduled on Feb. 16 and 17 but were extended to the weekend.

"The new agreement expands aviation links between Manama (Bahrain capital) and Manila from the current four flights a

week to six, with potential to go up to 10 or even more," CAB Executive Director Tomas Mañalac said in an interview.

Bahrain has four entitlements a week to Manila and five to provincial airports. Aside from the two conditional flights to Manila, it secured two unconditional flights to Clark in Pampanga, according to the CAB chief.

"Bahrain also promised to help develop trade and tourism in the Clark and Subic corridors," Mañalac added. "Their representatives said they are interested in bidding for the upgrade of the Clark airport."

The board of directors of Clark Development Corp. had approved in the fourth quarter of 2005 a plan to upgrade the air

port in the next five years in line with the expanding operations of the Clark aviation group. Budget carriers from the region have chosen Clark as their hub.

Sources, however, said that PAL was still unhappy about a part of the deal with Bahrain, which provided a 21-day period for Gulf Air and PAL to conclude a code-share arrangement.

Under a code-share deal, PAL will assign its four unused entitle-

ments to Gulf Air for a fee.

Without a code-share deal between the two carriers within 21 days, then aviation officials of Bahrain and the Philippines would meet again to resolve the issue. PAL was worried that 21 days would not be enough to complete commercial agreements on code sharing.

The flag carrier was also concerned that the government had

RP/B2

The reports said that proceeds from a possible sale, which may occur before July, would help pay debt.

As of press time, attempts to verify with SMC president Ramon S. Ang proved futile. SMC has also not issued any official reply to the story as of this time.

SMC's Australian assets include dairy firm National Foods Ltd., brewer J Boag & Son, and juice maker Berni Ltd.

SMC/B3

SMC plans public sale of shares of Aussie units

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

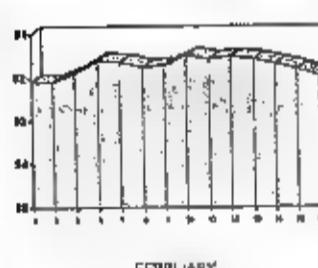
FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT

San Miguel Corp. has asked investment bank Morgan Stanley to check demand for an initial public offering of its Australian unit this year, according to wire reports yesterday, citing people familiar with the plan.

But market analysts think SMC's reported plan to go public with its Australian business may be premature at this time.



EXCITORS CURRENCIES



As of 5 p.m., Feb. 20, 2006
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 20, 2006
per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 16, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Stocks fall on oil, political worries

SHARE PRICES
closed 0.86 percent lower yesterday as investors took profits across the board on fresh concerns over higher oil prices and rumors of a plot to destabilize the government, dealers said.

PLDT led the fall after Credit Suisse First Boston said further gains in the share price may be limited, a view increasingly shared by other houses.

The composite index ended down 18.06 points to 2,084.10, after trading between 2,074.77 and 2,102.18. Turnover was 666.42 million shares worth P1.2 billion.

The broader all-shares index fell 12.25 points to 995.54.

Losers led gains 62 to 20, with 42 stocks unchanged.

Political unrest in Nigeria has cut output of crude oil there, raising fears that world prices will rise.

In Manila, an explosion ripped through a garbage bin on the grounds of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Malacanang palace by mid-day but there were no casualties. The cause of the blast was not immediately known.

"Most of the positive news is out and has been digested by the market. It's now time for a reality check. The volatility in oil prices is an area of major concern," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings.

Higher oil prices threaten to push up consumer prices and lower consumption, which could lead to leaner profits for companies and slower economic growth, dealers said.

"We're going through a consolidation mode with a downward bias," said Nastor Aguilera of DA Market Securities.

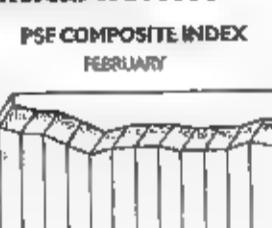
Dealers said recent broker notes about a nearly saturated telecommunications industry here and the limited prospects for earnings have weighed on heavyweight telecommunications stocks.

PLDT retreated P25 to P1,745 as rival Globe Telecom fell P10 to P820.

Top-traded Bank of the Philippines Islands ended unchanged at P58.50, while its parent, Ayala Corp., fell P2.50 to P330.

San Miguel A-shares, limited to Filipino investors, fell 50 centavos to P61.50. San Miguel B-shares, available to Filipino and foreign investors alike, were down 50 centavos to P82.

AFP



As of 5 p.m., Feb. 20, 2006

(See stock market report on Page B3)

per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 16, 2006

WHAT'S INSIDE

Dick Cheney
to star
in 'Top Gun 2'



Ayala posts
12% increase
in profit

/B2

/B3

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RP, Bahrain reach air accord

From page B1
failed to prioritize the more important issue of clinching a stopover and pick-up deal with Dubai and Saudi Arabia so that PAL could continue ser-

vicing the Manila-Riyadh route. PAL will stop its thrice weekly Manila-Riyadh flights starting March 2.

"We don't expect any problems from either Gulf Air or PAL on the

joint service agreement. I think this is a good deal for both countries," Manila said.

Bahrain originally asked for six additional entitlements to Manila.

The just-concluded air talks, the first for the Philippines this year, had been difficult and made more complex because of PAL's pending request to improve air ties with Saudi Arabia.

The Philippines had nothing much to gain from expanding air ties with Bahrain as the Gulf kingdom had long liberalized its air policies, according to former PAL president Avelino Zapanta.

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Ron Nathan

Dick Cheney to star in 'Top Gun 2'

AT KENNEDY AIRPORT, a school teacher was arrested while trying to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a set square and a slide rule. The US Attorney General said that he believes that the man is a member of the dreaded Al-gebra movement. He is being charged by the FBI with carrying weapons of math instruction.

Al-gebra is a fearsome cult. They use code names such as eggs squared and pie and fly off in a tangent at the slightest provocation. They study explosives from all angles and leave behind a trail of wrecked angles. Their leader, Sir Circumference, moves in concentric circles and sleeps on a log table. As a youth, while working in a circus, he fell off a trapezoid.

If they are of the right caliber, they train to become snipers and study trigonometry. If recognizable by his beard, eclipse it. Fortunately, they can be identified by their dental records. All mathematicians have square roots.

AN OLD lady of 80 was charged with stealing a can of peaches. "Why did you do it?" asked the judge. "Because I was hungry." "How many peaches were in the can?" "Six, your honor." "In that case, I sentence you to 6 days in jail."

At that point, her husband raised his hand. "Do you wish to say something?" asked the judge. "Yes, your honor. She also stole a can of peas."

Petrol prices are so high that, when I went into a garage and asked for P50 worth, the attendant dabbed some behind my ears.

It is my mother-in-law's birthday tomorrow and my wife wants me to buy her something electric. Has anybody got a chair?

I went to see the remake of "The Pink Panther," but it is not as good as the original. As an actress, Beyoncé is underestimated.

LAST week, a successful IPO was launched, a large issue and at a fixed price. URC increased its float from 6 percent to 36 percent by offering P10 billion worth of shares at P17. Although eclipsed by the IPO of the larger First Gen, which went to an immediate discount and stayed there, URC was 3 times oversubscribed and opened at P18, a premium of 6 percent.

This is perfect because it was offered at a fair price and investors knew exactly how much they had to pay. If shares are priced too low, the issue will be many times oversubscribed by speculators, and open at a large premium. The speculators will get most of the shares and sell them at the opening at a fat profit. Unfortunately, this means that the small investor will be cut out or forced to pay a high price. Ideally, an IPO should be 2-3 times oversubscribed and open at a premium of 5 percent to 10 percent.

Unless we want the IPO market to sink like the Titanic, I would ask the president of the PSE to ask companies to follow the fixed price system. He has already made 5 major changes in the Phisix, which removes 5 small poorly performing companies, replacing them with 5 large cap stocks, all leaders in their fields.

The index is not meant to be the 30 best stocks, it is meant to be the 30 stocks most representative of Philippine industry. By next year, URC, First Gen, and RLC will be obvious candidates because of their size and float so further changes are likely. There are supposed to be 10 IPOs this year, including GMA Network, which is currently increasing its issued capital from P2 billion to P5 billion.

Another suggestion I have is to instruct all mining and oil companies to convert their 1-centavo shares to 1-peso by means of a 1-for-100 reverse split. This does not cost the companies anything, nor does it alter the value of the holding. It just makes prices look more respectable. For example, OMICO at 0055, in dollar terms is \$0.001, so for \$10 an American fund manager could buy 10,000 OMICO or a hamburger combo.

At the same time, the A and B shares should be consolidated into one class as in other countries. They are usually the same price or differ by one fluctuation. Actually, this was ordered by the SEC 10 years ago at a seminar, which I attended. Failure to comply would result in a daily fine and delisting after 30 days. None of the companies took the slightest notice of the SEC order and none have been fined or delisted. This would not affect PHILEX as it has a par value of P1.

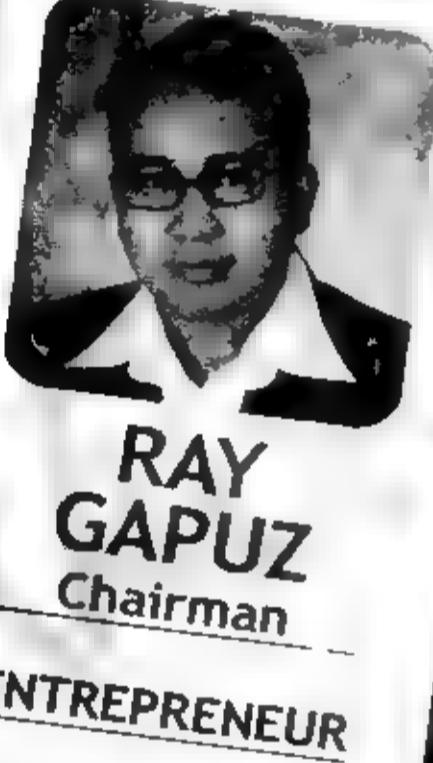
Last Friday, the Phisix came to life with a 26-point jump. The catalyst was Globe, which rose P35 on Thursday (including a P20 dividend) and another P60 on Friday. Macquarie Securities upgraded the stock from "underperform" to "outperform," with its 1-year price target raised from P650 to P950.

EPCI reported profits for 2005 were up from P1.8 billion to P2.4 billion. This will make it harder for Banco de Oro to acquire the 25 percent stake of the SSS, which indicated earlier that it would consider a slightly higher offer. Now, the price is likely to have gone up.

In the United States, Bernanke asserted that the US economy was on track, and that GDP would recover from the 4th quarter figure of 1.1 percent, affected by Hurricane Katrina. He will continue to hike interest rates at a measured pace as there was still an element of inflation present. In January, the Price Producer Index jumped 0.4 percent, far higher than expected, so Asian currencies are expected to weaken as differentials increase.

(mrbearbull@hotmail.com)

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na kapital. Mula sa ilang estudyante, naging libo-libo na ang negre-review sa R.A. Gapuz Review Center Inc. ngayon

Kung gusto mong umasenso tulad ko, attend na sa Go Negosyo Entrepreneurship Summit at Expo!"

PROF. RAY GAPUZ, JR Chairman, Gapuz Group of Companies-Chairman, R.A. Gapuz Review Center, Inc. • Cum Laude, Bachelor in Nursing, University of Sto. Tomas, 1992-Board Top-Notcher 1992 Philippine Nursing Licensure Examination- Summa Cum Laude Master of Arts in Nursing, University of Sto. Tomas 1998-Awardee, Ten Most Outstanding Filipino Entrepreneurs 2004-Finalist, 2005 Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year Award-Recipient, Agora Award for Entrepreneurship 2005-Recipient, Philippine Marketing Association Outstanding Filipino Achiever for Entrepreneurship-Recipient, Parangal ng Bayan Award for Entrepreneurship-Recipient, Who's Who in the Philippines for Education and Entrepreneurship

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DAY 1 (February 23, 2006/ 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

PCE Recognition of Outstanding Entrepreneur Teachers / Students / Programs by PCE • FORUM

1. Building National Confidence and Optimism To Inspire More Successful Filipino Entrepreneurs

Moderators: Rico Hizon, Anna Marie Periquet, Panelists: Socorro Ramos, Horacio Concepcion

III. Dr. Rolando Hortaleza, Atty. Felipe Gozon, Vivienne Tad, Henry Lim Ben, Jong, Rodriguez Rivera,

Marina Prieto, Grace Glory Go • FORUM 2. A Global Market Beckons The Filipino Entrepreneur

Panelists: Dennis Mandado, Dr. Paco Sandoval, Guillermo Luchangco, Ben Colayco, Menardo

Jimenez Jr. • FORUM 3. Uncommon Heroes for the Common Good. Panelists: Dr. Artin Arbeda,

Francisco Caloyco, Ray Gapuz, Jr., Rina Lopez-Bautista, Dylan Wilk, Gerry Gerbanimo • Breeding

The Entrepreneurial Mindset and Culture By Raju Mandhyan • FORUM 4. New Approaches to

Entrepreneurship Education • CULMINATING FORUM 7: Reporting the Age of Entrepreneurship in

the Philippines • Panelists: Sec. Arthur Yap, Sec. Estrella Alabastro, Chairman Carlton Peneo,

DIC/Secretary Fe Deldago, Undersecretary Zoraida Ameza Almazan, Executive Director Gondetra

Amata, Gov. Luis Raymond F. Villaluzer, Linda Wirth, Johnlu Koa, Prof. Josephine Aguilar

DAY 2 (February 24, 2006/ 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

Opening Ceremonies Cutting of Ribbon: VP Noli de Castro, Sen. Manuel Villar, Sen. Manuel Rosas

III. Sen. Ramon Magatsay Jr., Sen. Francis Pangilinan, Cong. Wilhelmina Alvarado, Mayor Rosendo

Coppo, Mayor Freddie Taga, Government Officials, Partner Organizations • International Workshop

on Technopreneurship • Conducted by Prof. Patrick Chan • DOST • DOST • Franchise Your Business An Option for Growth By Philippine Franchise Association

The Entrepreneur • Yourself By Jay Ledeza • Finding Your Opportunity of a Lifetime

Where Do Entrepreneurs • Their Idea By Jay Ledeza • Moving Innovations to Market By

Mark Arroyo • The Essentials of a Successful Business Start up By Joel Santos • FORUM, Financing Programs That Work • Moderator: Max Botante • Panelists: National livelihood Support Fund,

Programs providers, ABS-CBN Bayan Microfinance Foundation, Pawnshops, Cooperatives, Intellectual Property Office

• Managing and Optimizing Your Intellectual Capital By Intellectual Property Office

MENTORING SCHEDULE

FEB 24

Robert Trota • Butz Bartolome • Johnlu Koa • Maria Ester Bautista • Les Reyes • Jean Henri

Udallier • Mars Chua • Beck Marpuri • Joey Sunco • Edward Lim • Henry Lisa • Jofi Bias • Derby

Brigido • Vince Padilla • Rosmari Jose • Joey Slogen • Tess Ngan Tian • Ben Colayco • Carl

Balita • Chet Juan • Luis Polocer • Lucy Ga • Jose Che Soller • Marissa Andal • Joey Concepcion

• Anna Marie Periquet

FEB 25

Robert Trota • Butz Bartolome • Les Reyes • Luis Polocer • John Alvaro • Greg Benzon

• Bing Limjoco • Rommel Juan • Richie Cuna • Ray Gapuz • Chet Juan • Tess Ngan Tian • Victor

Tan • Rolando Hortaleza • Jo Magatsay • Joey Concepcion • Anna Marie Periquet

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| (As of February 20, 2006) | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------|
| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
| Bank of the Philippines Inc. | 35 | 35 | 35 | 35 | 1,000 |
| Bank of the Philippines Inc. | 59 | 59 | 58 | 58.5 | 5,000 |
| China Banking Corp. | 615 | 635 | 615 | 635 | 1 |
| Christians Savings Bank | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 44 |
| Equitable Bank Inc. | 83 | 84.5 | 83 | 84.5 | 541 |
| Equitable Bank & Trust | 23 | 33 | 32 | 33 | 20 |
| Philippine National Bank | 30.5 | 31.5 | 30 | 31.5 | 20 |
| Security Bank Corp. | 34.5 | 34.5 | 33 | 34 | 2 |
| Union Bank of the Philippines Inc. | 34.5 | 34.5 | 34 | 34 | 1 |
| ATR Kim Eng Corp. | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 3235 | 3235 | 3235 | 3235 | 1 |
| Philippine Stock Exchange Inc. | 145 | 145 | 145 | 145 | 1 |
| Sun Life Financial Inc. | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 1 |
| Unilife Corp. | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 300 |
| INDUSTRIAL | | | | | |
| Electricity, Energy Power & Water | | | | | |
| First Gen Corp. | 45 | 45.5 | 45 | 45 | 580,100 |
| First Power Corp. | 42 | 42 | 41.5 | 41.5 | 226,900 |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 12.75 | 12.75 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 14,100 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 19.75 | 19.75 | 19 | 19 | 374,800 |
| Manila Water Co. Inc. | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 4,257,000 |
| Patron Corp. | 4.65 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.65 | 2,577,000 |
| Food, Beverage & Tobacco | | | | | |
| Alestra Milk Corp. | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 13,000 |
| Globeña San Miguel Inc. | 20.5 | 20.5 | 20.5 | 20.5 | 50,000 |
| Juliana Foods Corp. | 35.5 | 35.5 | 33.5 | 33.5 | 795,900 |
| NFM Corp. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 125,000 |
| Roxas Holdings Inc. | 1.84 | 1.84 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 81.5 | 81.5 | 80.5 | 80.5 | 156,200 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 83 | 83 | 82 | 82 | 3,704,800 |
| Universo Robina Corp. | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 700,000 |
| Vitacorp Corp. | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 1 |
| CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & RELATED SERVICES | | | | | |
| South East Asian Cement | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 310,000 |
| Philippine Equities Inc. | 1.34 | 1.34 | 1.32 | 1.32 | 1,120,000 |
| Holcim Philippines Inc. | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 100 |
| Reinforced Cement Corp. | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1,000 |
| DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS | | | | | |
| Weltex Industries Inc. | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.235 | 0.24 | 1,180,000 |
| HOLDING FIRMS | | | | | |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdq A | 0.0085 | 0.009 | 0.0085 | 0.0085 | 42,000,000 |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdq B | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 14,000,000 |
| Ayala Corp. | 330 | 330 | 330 | 330 | 149,10 |
| Abot & Equity Ventures | 4.85 | 4.85 | 4.85 | 4.85 | 5,000 |
| Ajio Rel Holdings Inc. | 0.025 | 0.025 | 0.024 | 0.024 | 900,000 |
| A.S. Serrano Corp. | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 2,360 |
| APG Corp. Inc. | 0.215 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 180,000 |
| Anglo Gold Holdings Corp. | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 280,000 |
| Batibar Resources & Holdings | 0.62 | 0.62 | 0.62 | 0.62 | 10,000 |
| Bonanza Holdings Corp. | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 2,000,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.05 | 3.05 | 250,000 |
| Elmirex Dev Corp. | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 2,883,000 |
| House Oil Investments Inc. | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1,000,000 |
| MultiTech Inv. Corp. | 0.23 | 0.23 | 0.23 | 0.23 | 20,400,000 |
| Prime Orion Phils. Inc. | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 3,790,000 |
| Prime Media Holdings Inc. | 0.245 | 0.245 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 20,000 |
| Saint Gobain Inc. | 0.5 | 0.51 | 0.51 | 0.51 | 400,000 |
| Simpill Corp. | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 900,000 |
| Sol Invictus Corp. | 212 | 219 | 215 | 217 | 253,200 |
| Sol Invictus Corp. | 0.37 | 0.37 | 0.37 | 0.37 | 3,000,000 |
| Solairani Resources Corp. | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 3,000,000 |
| PROPERTY | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.75 | 9,883,400 |
| Bisila Corp. | 1 | 1 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 940,000 |
| Carmon Equities Inc. | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.235 | 0.235 | 7,750,000 |
| Cebu Holdings Inc. | 1.62 | 1.62 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 520,000 |
| C. B. P. Homes Inc. | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 290,000 |
| Cylinder Bay Corp. | 0.225 | 0.225 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 3,370,100 |
| Elmirex East Land Inc. | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.44 | 0.44 | 120,000 |
| Fairmont Holdings Inc. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 5,943,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Inc. | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 570,000 |
| Global Phil. Properties | 0.21 | 0.215 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 1,553,000 |
| Metanorit Corp. | 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.4 | 1.42 | 3,260,000 |
| Metra Pacific Corp. | 0.23 | 0.24 | 0.23 | 0.24 | 1,260,000 |
| Philippine Estates Corp. | 0.145 | 0.145 | 0.145 | 0.145 | 200,000 |
| Robustos Land Corp. | 6.3 | 6.4 | 6.3 | 6.4 | 108,000 |
| Pineapple Oil Holdings Inc. | 0.19 | 0.19 | 0.185 | 0.185 | 2,681,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 1.36 | 1.36 | 1.35 | 1.35 | 1,000 |
| Sai Prince Holdings Inc. | 3 | 3 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 49,000 |
| Unimade Holdings Inc. | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 900,000 |
| SERVICE | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 19.75 | 19.75 | 19.75 | 11 | 126,000 |
| Manila Bulletin Publ. Inc. | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 510,000 |
| Digital Telecom Phils. Inc. | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 1,000,000 |
| Globalcom Corp. | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 1,000,000 |
| Simpilo Tel. Corp. | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 13,800 |
| Phil. Long Dist. Tel. Co. | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 106,000 |
| Boylegarden Holdings Inc. | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.16 | 0.17 | 1,510,000 |
| Imperial Rice | 0.04 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 300,000 |
| Loctite Inc. | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 40,000 |
| ISM Communications Corp. | 0.0525 | 0.0525 | 0.0525 | 0.0525 | 3,000,000 |
| Music Semiconductors Corp. | 1.24 | 1.26 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 142,000 |
| Prinweb Corp. | 0.028 | 0.028 | 0.028 | 0.028 | 326,000 |
| Int. Container Term. Sv. | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 200,000 |
| Keppe Phils. Marine Inc. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 2,000 |
| Levante Shipping Corp. | 1.25 | 1.26 | 1.25 | 1.26 | 2,000 |
| Leisure & Resorts Corp. | 1.82 | 1.82 | 1.78 | 1.78 | 1,291,000 |
| Manila Yacht Club Inc. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 21,000 |
| Promarine Eng. Projects Inc. | 0.28 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 470,000 |
| Waterfront Plus Inc. | 0.4 | 0.41 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 12,100 |
| EDUCATION | | | | | |
| Centro Escolar University | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.6 | 8.6 | 10,000 |
| Far Eastern University | 580 | 600 | 600 | 600 | 1,000 |
| IP College Inc. | 3.2 | 3.25 | 3.2 | 3.25 | 20,000 |
| DIVERSIFIED SERVICES | | | | | |
| Parcys Inc. | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 222,000 |
| APIX Mining Co. Inc. A | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 180,000 |
| APIX Mining Co. Inc. B | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.18 | 1.18 | 471,000 |
| Ateneo Mining & Industrial | 5.5 | 5.0055 | 5.0055 | 5.0055 | 3,000,000 |
| Ateneo Mining & Dev. Inc. | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 1,026,000 |
| Den-Copper Silver Mines | 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 50,000 |
| Lamang Cams Mfg. Co. A | 0.215 | 0.22 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 1,730,000 |
| Lamang Cams Mfg. Co. B | 0.26 | 0.27 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 2,120,000 |
| Alabang Mining Corp. A | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.017 | 0.017 | 61,000 |
| Alabang Mining Corp. B | 0.025 | 0.027 | 0.026 | 0.027 | 13,500,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. | 0.0355 | 0.036 | 0.0355 | 0.0355 | 66,000,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 1.68 | 1.7 | 1.65 | 1.65 | 40,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. A | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.72 | 1.78 | 3,027,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. B | 2.75 | 2.75 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 1,000 |
| Semirad Mining Corp. | 0.25 | 0.27 | 0.25 | 0.27 | 1,000 |
| United Pagasa Mining Co. | 0.37 | 0.37 | 0.34 | 0.34 | 1,000 |
| Vulcan Ind. | | | | | |

CURRENCIES

| February 28, 2006 | Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent</th |
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Page 108-000000 0917-7828884

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Batangas
Municipality of San Jose, Batangas
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
The Municipal Government of San Jose, Batangas through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and to bid eligible. It is required with and classified by the PCAB for the "Bidders" contract.
PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER DESCRIPTION APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT DURATION SOURCE OF FUND BIDDER
San Jose, Batangas
Market, San Jose, Batangas
Prospective Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the contract being conducted in a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the contract. The BAC will issue non-discretionary post-qualification bid calculation bid.
All prospective bidders shall be registered with the BAC. The BAC will conduct post-qualification and award of contracts shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
The Schedule of BAC activities is as follows:
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of letter of intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility
2. Submission of Eligibility Requirements
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check
4. Submission of Bid Documents
5. Pre-Bid Conference
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids
7. Award of Contract
8. Contract Duration
9. Post-qualification and award of contracts
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Stop the devastation from becoming an even deeper tragedy.

The news, unfortunately, is everywhere. As you read this, hope dims for rescuers searching for signs of life from townspeople buried under 25 to 35 meters of mud, rock and debris in Bgy. Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, Southern Leyte. There are 400 survivors so far, but as many as 1,200 are still missing. Among those feared lost is an entire school filled with children taking their annual achievement exams. And now, there is a forecast of another tropical depression with the threat of more landslides that may affect the people in nearby barangays. Around 1,400 families have already been evacuated.

In tragedies like these, survivors pick up the pieces as best as they can. Schools and homes are destroyed, and loved ones are separated and gone forever in a matter of minutes. That is why we at UNICEF are asking for your help.

Hope must be kept alive for the survivors, and especially for the children. In emergency situations such as this, the youngest of children are the most vulnerable. Although they have lost the most, they stand the best chance of carrying on despite the circumstances, if only we can help them. And that is why we at UNICEF are calling on you now.

Survivors need provisions for basic nutrition, clean water and sanitation, medical care and psychosocial intervention. They

need to be accounted for and placed with their families and relatives. Children must be protected from exploitation and trafficking. School books and materials must be replenished as part of rehabilitation efforts. Unless survivors, particularly children, are cared for immediately, efforts to rescue them will be in vain.

WE MUST ACT NOW to protect those who have survived and to prevent further loss of lives. UNICEF NEEDS YOUR HELP. Any donation you make to the UNICEF Emergency Fund will be greatly appreciated, and used for the welfare and support of children affected by tragedies such as the landslides in Southern Leyte. Please donate to the UNICEF Emergency Fund NOW.

REPLY FORM

YES, I want to make a difference in the life of a child in devastated areas.

I am donating the amount of:
Pph _____
to the UNICEF Emergency Fund.

UNICEF needs your help. You can send your much-needed donation through any of the following ways:

BY FAX: We will accept donations through credit card. Simply fill out this form, and fax to 901-01-95 or 729-4529.

HOTLINE: 758-1000 (We can pick-up cash or check donations within Metro Manila.)

ON-LINE: (NEW) www.unicef.org/philippines
BAYAD CENTER: (NEW) We accept donations through selected Bayad Centers only. Please call hotline for details.

G-CASH SERVICE: Type DONATE <space><amount><space><MPIN> send to 28829178UNICEF or 28829178854233

METROBANK: You can deposit to the UNICEF account at any Metrobank branch. Please call hotline for details.

Please charge my credit card.

VISA Annex
 MasterCard Diners
 BPI RCBC/JCB

Credit Card Number _____

Expiry Date: _____

CVV2/CVC2 (last three digits printed on signature panel of the reverse side of BPI Card only)

Signature _____

Your Full Name

Print with your full name and address on INQUIRIES and mail to UNICEF Philippines

Mailing Address Home Office

No. _____ Street _____ Town/Municipality _____

City/Province _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone Numbers (Please put your daytime phone number)

Residence _____

Business _____

Fax _____

Birthdate _____

E-mail Address _____

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LIFESTYLE

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or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

An orange a day...

By Pam Pastor

HERE ARE SCARY statistics: Studies show that the average person drinks soda 10-15 times more than juice.

That means so many people are missing out on the benefits of regular fruit juice intake.

Tropicana Pure Premium Orange Juice, the world's most popular not-from-concentrate orange juice drink, hopes to change the figures.

Tropicana Pure Premium, which was started by Italian im-

migrant Anthony Rossi in 1947, boasts of having 100-percent all-natural orange juice—without sugar, water, artificial coloring or preservatives.

It has remained true to its philosophy, "Nothing added, nothing taken away." No wonder it has been a breakfast staple for many families in different continents for decades now.

And now, thanks to Pepsico, Tropicana Pure Premium is available in the Philippines.

Handpicked

Oranges are carefully hand-picked from groves in Florida, washed and sorted before the juice is gently extracted, filtered

and blended. Then the juice is pasteurized to control microorganisms that may be harmful when consumed.

Not only did Tropicana pioneer the pasteurization of orange juice, it made sure no flavor was lost in the process.

Each carton contains 20 oranges, which means you are able to enjoy having freshly squeezed orange juice minus all the hassle. And because Tropicana is pure orange juice, you get to enjoy all the health benefits.

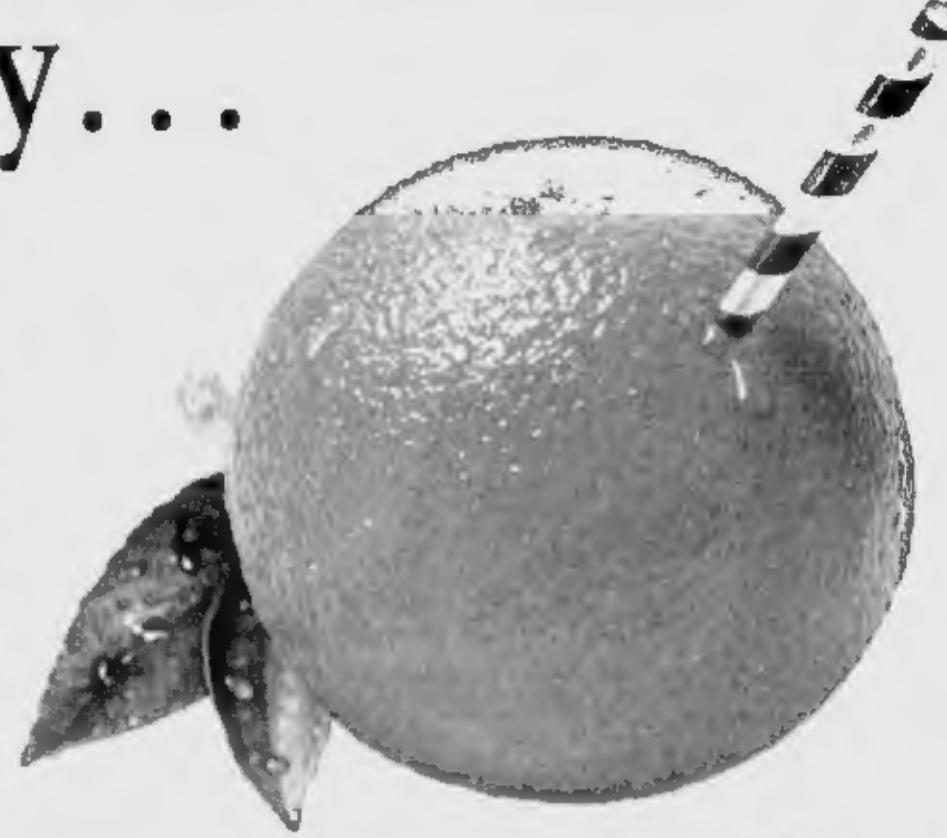
A glass of Tropicana will give 120 percent of your Vitamin C requirement for the day. Vitamin C has been found to help protect against cancer, heart disease, other inflammatory conditions caused by harmful oxygen free radicals, and even the common cold. It can also help maintain healthy skin and gums.

Calcium-enriched

Tropicana has a variant that contains calcium and Vitamin D that can help prevent osteoporosis or brittle bones. Its potassium content—as much as a banana's—can help reduce the risk of high blood pressure and stroke.

Orange juice is also rich in folate, which keeps your mind and body alert and can lower the risk of heart disease. Pregnant women need folate to help reduce the risk of neural tube birth defects.

Your digestive system will also reap benefits from regular orange juice intake: Tropicana Pure Premium contains fiber that can promote its health and optimum per-



formance.

Those watching their weight need not worry—Tropicana Pure Premium is fat-free.

Members of the media enjoyed recently a Tropicana Weekend at the Mandarin Oriental. The healthy lunch was enjoyed with glasses of Tropicana, naturally. Then the group went to the spa for a relaxing massage.

Dinner at The Tivoli was a delight. Amuse Bouche (mussel for the women, foie gras for men), Cream of Wild Mushrooms with Garlic Croutons, Australian Beef Tenderloin, Chocolate Pavlova with Leatherwood Honey Ice Cream and Marinated Mangoes

How can orange juice help your body? Let Tropicana count the ways

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph



TROPICANA Pure Premium contains fiber that can promote the health of the digestive system for optimum performance.

IF YOU ARE BORED WITH YOUR workouts and feel like the fitness improvements you used to see have vanished into thin air, then you may want to try circuit, interval or cross training.

These methods are not new. They've been around a long time and, in fact, if you stick around a gym long enough, you're bound to hear about them. Here are the advantages and disadvantages:

Circuit training

Circuit training was invented in 1953 as an efficient way for coaches to train many athletes in a limited amount of time with limited equipment.

The exerciser moves through a series of weight training or calisthenics "stations" arranged consecutively. It was a fast-paced workout of 15-45 seconds per station with little (15-30 seconds) or no rest between stations. Today, this is known as "circuit weight training."

Research has shown that it can increase muscular strength and endurance. There is a mild improvement in aerobic stamina but only if the rest periods are kept very short.

Another variation is "aerobic circuit training." Aerobic stations like a treadmill, rower, bike, or stepper (one to five minutes per station) are interspersed with weight-training stations. This protocol has been found to increase aerobic stamina and muscular endurance and strength.

Interval training

Interval training was the brainchild of Dr. Woldemar Gerschler of Germany in 1930. He found that athletes could exercise at more intense levels if they were given intervals of rest or relief to recover from the intensity.

Interval training alternates periods of high intensity (called the work interval) with periods of lower intensity (called the rest or relief interval). One work interval and one rest interval equals one cycle. There are usually eight to 10 cycles in one workout session. It is quite demanding so it should be done on alternating days.

The ratio of work to rest intervals depends on you. A ratio of 1 is to 3 (1:3) means the recovery is three times as long as the work. An example is 30 seconds sprint and 90 seconds walking. A 1:2 ratio would be 60 seconds run and 120 seconds jog.

It is a time-efficient workout that trains both the aerobic and anaerobic systems. Aerobic is steady and continuous (walking or jogging) while anaerobic exercise is short quick bursts of power and speed (running as fast as you can for 30 seconds). A marathon is aerobic while the 100-meter dash is anaerobic.

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ered that when their athletes did low-level training different from their sport, on their rest days, it enhanced recovery and maintained fitness levels better than pure rest.

Cross training means doing different exercise activities either during the same workout session or on different workout days. It relieves the boredom of doing the same exercise all the time. It helps you burn more calories by not allowing your body to become too efficient at one activity.

If planned properly, it prevents muscle imbalance by working all your muscles. For ex-

These methods are actually not new. They've been around a long time

MEDICard For Healthcare Deserved

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Charge
Doc!

What are the common heart disease in children?

Heart disease in children are classified into acquired and congenital. The most common acquired heart disease is Rheumatic Heart Disease. There are two types of congenital heart disease: 1) Atrioventricular and 2) Cystic group (blue babies). The most common congenital heart disease is ventricular septal defect. In this condition, there is a "hole" in the septum, the structure which separates the pumping chambers of the heart, the left and right ventricles. Appearance of the signs and symptoms of this disease will depend on the size of the defect. Small defects may go undetected but large defects may manifest as rapid or difficulty in breathing, poor sucking, rapid heart beat and poor weight gain. The most common cystic heart disease (blue babies) is Tetralogy of Fallot, manifested as bluish discoloration of the lips and nailbeds. The above-mentioned diseases, surgery is indicated if symptoms appear early.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our medical service provider from Specialist Group Hospital & Transplant Center in Taguig City: Dr. High Schellhas-Gutierrez, Dr. Quito, as she constantly utilized her patients to specialize in Pediatric Cardiology and has been in practice for 20 years now. She finished her medical degree from UERJ/USP and followed by her specialization training for Pediatric from Pediatric Hospital General Hospital. She later took her subspecialization training in Cardiology from Philippine Heart Center. She is an active member of the Philippine Pediatric Society, Philippine Society of Pediatric Cardiology, Philippine Medical Association, Philippine Medical Society and Philippine Medical Women's Association. She is married to Dr. Ernesto Quito and blessed with 3 kids.

MEDICard members may visit her for consultation services at Specialist Group Hospital & Transplant Center, Makati City 1200, from 8am to 4pm.

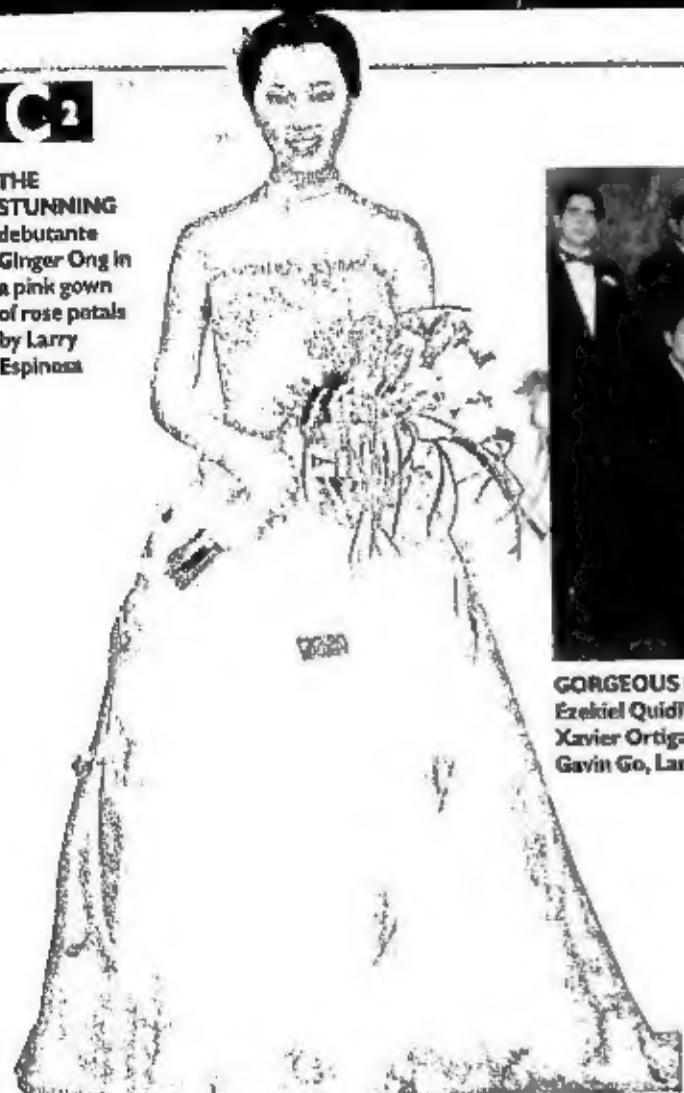
MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardph.com for your inquiries on health matters.

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Nicky

THE STUNNING debutante Ginger Ong in a pink gown of rose petals by Larry Espinosa



COTILLION de Honor participants. Front: Ryan Contreras, Ma. Beatriz Roqueza, the debutante, Erica Herrera and Ivan Chan; (standing) Patrick Lao, James Lim, Melisse Ang, Vincent Fideles, Sophia Ng, Pamela Hwang, Charles Ty, Sheree Chua, Jusjin Uy, Johanna Kho, Osbert Wong, Johanna Ty and Glenn Ng



GODPARENTS Victor and Nancy Lim



GODPARENTS Ignacio and Marga Ortigas



GINGER is swept off her feet by dashing Marc Nelson.



GORGEOUS Ginger Ong was presented the 18 roses by: (front row) Benedict Pua, Ezekiel Quidilla, Patrick Lao, Howard Chang, Sherwin Yu and Earl Tamantong; (back) Xavier Ortigas, Teeson Lim, Jedrek Ong, Ellis Chua, Eduardo Firmalo, Kevin Chong, Gavin Go, Larson Chan, Jeffrey Ong and Reginald Tan



GINGER with her family: Eldest brother Jedrek with wife Sunny and son Justin; her dad, business tycoon Jovy Ong, and mom Genie Gochoco; and brothers Jeremy and Jeffrey during the cake-cutting ceremony. Pank Ching did the elegant birthday cake.

A royal ball for a princess

STUNNING BEAUTY AND young charmer Ginger Ong, daughter of mega tycoon Jovy Ong and his attractive wife Genie, looked every inch a princess as she entered the Makati Shangri-La Hotel's Rizal Ballroom for the celebration of her grand debut, *palanggas*.

This event, which every young girl dreams of, had the grandeur and excitement of the Vienna Opera Ball. The ballroom was a virtual Austrian palace with huge

columns, red curtains and white drapes, grand staircase and majestic chandeliers. The foyer was filled with lush greenery, giving a cool, garden-like ambience.

The visual splendor was complemented by the strains of Johann Strauss waltzes, superbly played by the 30-piece Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, no less, dahlings, that signaled the start of the dance for the traditional *chi-chi* debutante's ball. The event also featured the Philippine Madrigal Quartet.

In keeping with the elegance of a royal ball, *palanggas*, everyone was in their best formal garb. As expected, the debutante drew "oohs," "ahhs" and applause from the invitees when she walked in, coming down the grand staircase regally in her gorgeous Larry Espinosa gown, which was fully covered with Swarovski crystals.

Ginger wore another Espinosa masterpiece toward the end of the affair—a pink gown with beads in the shape of petals. Après her formal introduction, the beautiful faces in the cotillion made their way to the dance floor in pairs, drawing loud, loud applause from the cheering crowd. They opened the dance with an elegant waltz.

It was truly an awesome sight. Moi watched the dance of 18 roses that included the waltz, foxtrot, tango and swing, superbly choreographed by Anamarie Quirino. Without missing a beat, the customary 18 candles and cake-cutting ceremonies took place.

Then it was nostalgia time with an audio-video presentation of our debutante's growing years.

The highlight of the affair, and her shining moment, was when Ginger dazzled us all with her fantastic voice as she sang hits from Broadway and romantic movie themes. She was followed by the Madrigal Quartet, a group of fab

singers from the University of the Philippines College of Music, headed by Mark Carpio, Ginger's vocal coach and mentor, no less.

More surprises? Why not, *palanggas*? This multifaceted, brilliant young miss' dancing talent had everyone in complete attention and admiration as she did a breathtaking ballet piece.

Humly sportscaster and versatile television host Marc Nelson emceed the event, with his characteristic wit and humor, *palanggas*.

The glitzy affair benefiting a regal young lady making her transition to full womanhood came to an end past Cinderella's bedtime, dahlings.

Cool Ginger remained totally glam, as she partied like the princess she was for the night. Cheers, *palanggas*!

Palace has moved

Multifaceted restaurateur, the popular Colin Mackay, made it a point to announce his long-anticipated arrival in another scene with a big bang! His super famous Thai restaurant, the unmatched People's Palace, once in downtown Malate, has now transferred to its eye-catching new location in Greenbelt in uptown Makati, *palanggas*.

For the fab opening bash on an evening with a bright full moon, Mackay brought to Makati his renowned street parties in Malate, where he introduced the concept of "decadent parties." Boys would be girls and vice versa. Drag queens, as in the famous Tiffany show in Pattaya, Thailand, mingled with tons of invitees.

"Celebrate... the palace is open!" That was the tag line in the invitation. Many people were fashionably on time, arriving at 7 p.m. We were welcomed by tall drag queens in long sequined white gowns and fantastic white ostrich feather headdresses, looking like they had just stepped out of Brazil's Carnival del Rio, dahlings.

As soon as we stepped in, we were treated to an assortment of excellent Thai canapés and finger foods, like Tod Man Pla with Cucumber Relish; all-time favorite Pomelo, Prawn and Coconut Salad; and the cool, refreshing Iced Pandan Juice and Lemongrass-Ginger juice, *palanggas*. As the happening got going, more and more drinks were poured.

The opening was a reunion of some sort, as moi watched the upscale crowd that included the

Madrigal Quartet, a group of fab

obviously very much in love with Michelle, allow her to go out in the evening alone with another man? Is this for real or am I imagining things? I heard later that Michelle and Rene returned to the hotel around 2 a.m.

During breakfast the following day, I noticed Michelle and Rene had become very friendly with each other, even sitting beside each other at the table. I noticed Rene would even hold Michelle's hand or occasionally tap her shoulder. She would respond with a girlish smile.

Rudolf took all this casually and without any hint of anger or disapproval. He must have seen the puzzled look on my face because later that morning, when Rudolf and I were alone, he explained, "I



DIXIE Mabanta with our very own Tim Yap, People's Palace main man Colin Mackay and Mariko Jacinto



ED Feist and wife, Silk Cocoon's wonder woman Katrina Gobourne; with Mark Jentes



MYRZA Sison, Andrei Wisniewski and Mariano Garchitorena



MARK Sauncerson, Chico Angeles, Jacqueline Rohrbach, Richard Evans and Shahid Zahid



ARCHITECT Tonichi Mendoza, who worked on People's Palace; Philip Elenbaiss, Bo and Webb Lindquist



JIM Tan and talented Gemma Suzara



BEAUTIFUL twosome Inez Delgado and Chukri Prieto, with cousin Karla Delgado and her dad, businessman Ricardo Delgado

It has an ultra-modern and cool setting, gorgeously and tastefully designed by talented J. Anton Mendoza, no less, *palanggas*.

It's a must to call for reservations as it is packing them in, both for lunch and dinner, especially on weekends. Call 7292888.

The love story of Rudolf, Michelle and Rene

WHEN I WENT TO SWITZERLAND to accompany a world-famous Philippine healer and psychic surgeon in his healing mission, to my surprise, Rudolf and Michelle traveled all the way from Grenoble, France, to Zurich, Switzerland, to meet me at the airport.

I did not expect them to do that, so I had arranged for a young Swiss psychologist and researcher named Rene Schultz, whom I also met in Manila, to meet me at the Zurich Airport. I introduced Rene to Michelle and Rudolf.

They had instant rapport because of their common interest in Philippine healers and the so-called New Age Philosophy.

They decided to stay in our

hotel because of their strong desire to meet and be with the famous Filipino healer, who was invited by a wealthy Swiss jeweler paralyzed from the waist down. Western doctors could no longer help the patient.

Another man

On our second evening at the hotel, Rudolf said we were going out. Rene had rented a car. I thought the four of us would go out together. I was ready to get into the car after Rene and Michelle when Rudolf held me back and said with a smile, "No, Rene and Michelle are going out together. The two of us are going to see a movie."

I thought it strange but managed to say, "Oh, okay." As the

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

two drove away, Rudolf and I walked to the movie house, which was not far from where we were staying. I couldn't remember what the movie was about because it was in German.

After the movie, Rudolf and I went back to the hotel. I couldn't sleep that night. My Filipino conservative, medieval Catholic way of thinking couldn't understand what was happening.

How could Rudolf, who was

obviously very much in love with Michelle, allow her to go out in the evening alone with another man? Is this for real or am I imagining things? I heard later that Michelle and Rene returned to the hotel around 2 a.m.

During breakfast the following day, I noticed Michelle and Rene had become very friendly with each other, even sitting beside each other at the table. I noticed Rene would even hold Michelle's hand or occasionally tap her shoulder. She would respond with a girlish smile.

Rudolf took all this casually and without any hint of anger or disapproval. He must have seen the puzzled look on my face because later that morning, when Rudolf and I were alone, he explained, "I

know that in your country, women have very limited choices on whom to interact or socialize with. There is too much restriction on their behavior. I don't believe in that. I believe in giving the woman I love as much freedom as she wants."

More incredible

This was too much for me. I did not think this could ever happen in the Philippines. A week later on my way back to Manila, I witnessed something even more incredible.

After the healing session in Switzerland, we all went our separate ways. The healer and his companions went to Germany. I went to Paris to visit a friend and Rudolf and Michelle

returned to Grenoble, France. After a week, I was to go back to Manila via Zurich. I made arrangements with Rene Schultz to stay overnight in his apartment so he could bring me to the airport the next day.

I took the train from Paris to Zurich. At the train station, I was surprised to be met by Rene and Michelle. "Where is Rudolf?" I asked.

"Oh, he is not around," Rene replied. "He brought Michelle here because she wanted to stay with me a few days. I'm sorry you can't stay with me in my apartment because it is too small. I've booked you in a hotel instead. I didn't expect this development."

Neither did I.

To be continued.

Rising demand for bottled water raises new concerns

THE DEMAND FOR BOTTLED water, which is increasing worldwide, is producing unnecessary garbage and consuming vast quantities of energy.

Emily Arnold, reporting for Earth Policy News, said global consumption of bottled water reached 154 billion liters (41 billion gallons) in 2004, up 57 percent from the 98 billion liters consumed five years earlier.

Demand is rising even in areas where tap water is safe to drink. Arnold said although bottled water was often no healthier than tap water in the industrial world, it could cost up to 10,000 times more and was even more expensive than gasoline.

Some of the largest increases in bottled water consumption occurred in developing countries, she said.

What is of grave concern to environmentalists is the cost in terms of energy consumption resulting from the growing demand for bottled water.

Arnold pointed out that tap water was distributed through an energy-efficient infrastructure. On the other hand, transporting bottled water over long distances involved burning of massive quantities of fossil fuels.

Nearly a quarter of all bottled water crossed national borders to

reach consumers, transported by boat, train and truck.

Fossil fuels are also used in the packaging of water. The most commonly used plastic for making water bottles is polyethylene terephthalate (PET) derived from crude oil.

Making bottles to meet just Americans' demand for bottled water requires more than 1.5 million barrels of oil annually, enough to fuel some 100,000 US cars for a year. Worldwide, some 2.7 million tons of plastic are used to bottle water each year.

After the water is consumed, another problem arises—disposal.

Arnold said the Container Recycling Institute reported that 96 percent of plastic water bottles used in the United States became garbage or litter.

Burning used bottles produces poisonous byproducts such as chlorine gas and ash containing heavy metals. Buried water bottles can take up to 1,000 years to biodegrade.

The rapid growth in the industry also means water extraction was concentrated in communities where bottling plants were located, the author said. In India, she said, water extraction by Coca-Cola for Dasani bottled water and other drinks caused water shortages for over 50 villages.

Similar problems had been reported in Texas and in the Great Lakes region of North America. Farmers, fishers, and others who depended on water for their livelihoods were suffering from concentrated water extraction as water tables dropped quickly.

Though consumers associated bottled water with healthy living, Arnold said bottled water was not guaranteed to be any healthier than tap water. Some 40 percent of bottled water began as tap water; often the only difference was added minerals with no marked health benefit.

She added that in the US, water-quality standards set by the En-

vironmental Protection Agency for tap water were more stringent than the Food and Drug Administration's standards for bottled water.

Though clean, affordable drinking water was essential to people's health, Arnold said bottled water was not the solution to the problems of 1.1 billion people who lacked a secure water supply.

Improving and expanding existing water treatment and sanitation systems was more likely to provide safe and sustainable sources of water over the long term. In villages, rainwater harvesting and digging new wells could create more affordable sources of water.

Workshop for special children

A LECTURE-WORKSHOP ON "CONDUCTING EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT and Creating Learning Programs for Children with Special Needs" will be held today and tomorrow, Feb. 21-22, at the Center for Alternative and Relevant Education (CARE) Foundation Inc. in New Manila, Quezon City.

Romina Rizzari, SPED specialist and educator, is conducting the lecture-workshop designed for SPED teachers, therapists, parents, caregivers and advocates.

The lecture-workshop covers, among others, Taking a Child's History (developing rapport and positive working relationship with the family); Conducting Developmental Assessments (screening and describing a child's strengths and weaknesses); and Writing Recommendations (encouraging the family to begin the child's program).

Prioritizing Teaching Targets (determining what to teach first) and Creating the IEP (teaching specific skills in individualized settings) are topics covered by the module on Creating Learning Programs.

Reservation to the Lecture-Workshop is open 9 a.m.-12 nn at CARE Foundation, 22 Madison Ave., New Manila, Quezon City. Call 7009669 or e-mail careicr02@yahoo.com.



Another IAME Graduate

Dr. Michael Romero is the Chief Executive Officer of Harbour Centre Port Terminal, Inc. (HCPTI) which is one of the three commercial port terminals in Manila catering to both domestic and international bulk vessels with assets of almost P2 billion. He is also the chief financial officer of CFO of R-II Group of Companies, which includes R-II Holdings Inc., which handles three big corporate portfolios in the following industries: Housing and Construction, Property and Infrastructure Development, Environment Management and Port Operations and Management.

Last February 1, 2006, Dr. Michael Romero successfully defended his dissertation last at the International Academy of Management and Economics. His research is centered on Strategic Supply Chain Integration where he designed and recommended a working model using the Harbour Centre Port Terminal Incorporated as an example. The defense was held at the IAME ANC Studio/Theatre of the Noli Santos International Tower located at 1061 Metropolitan Avenue, San Antonio Village, Makati City, before three panelists namely Emmanuel T. Santos, Ph.D., panel chairman; Meen Rebolosi, Ph.D. and Ped Salvador, Ph.D., panelists; Dr. JB Chaves who served as tutor-advisor.

Dr. Michael Romero is one of IAME's model Ph.D. students because he epitomizes the true IAME graduate: an expert with extensive knowledge in a chosen industry, an entrepreneur in thinking where all aspects of an organization is important in a conceptual point of view, and an icon in stature for having achieved a doctoral degree where few men and women have achieved in their lifetime. Dr. Romero can truly be regarded as a role model for other entrepreneurs in the country who would like to validate their success stories with the highest academic degree possible in the form of a Ph.D.

He chose IAME because he believes IAME is at par with U.P., Ateneo, and La Salle in terms of quality of lecturers and contents of subjects in the curriculum.

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